IN THE RINE WOODS



REV. THOMAS L. BAILY

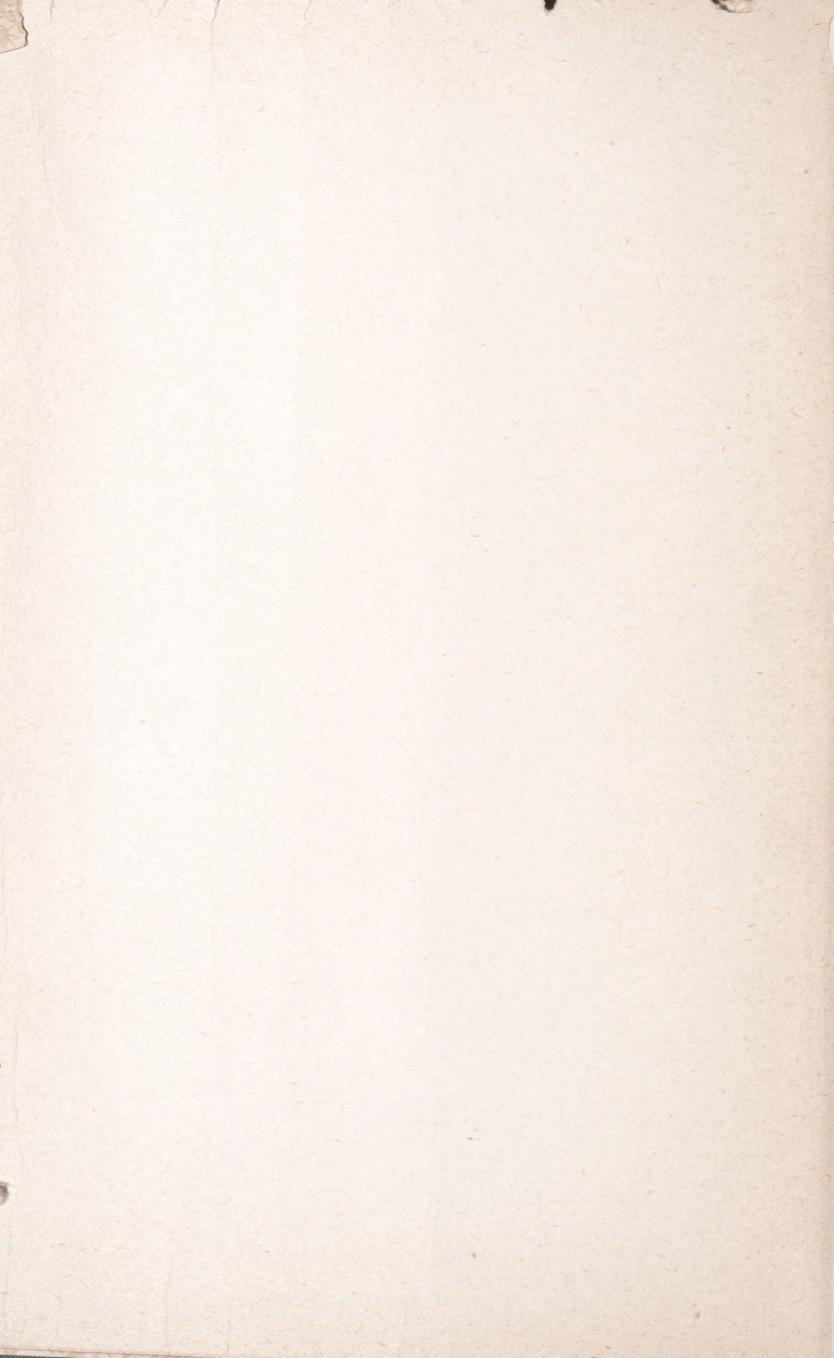
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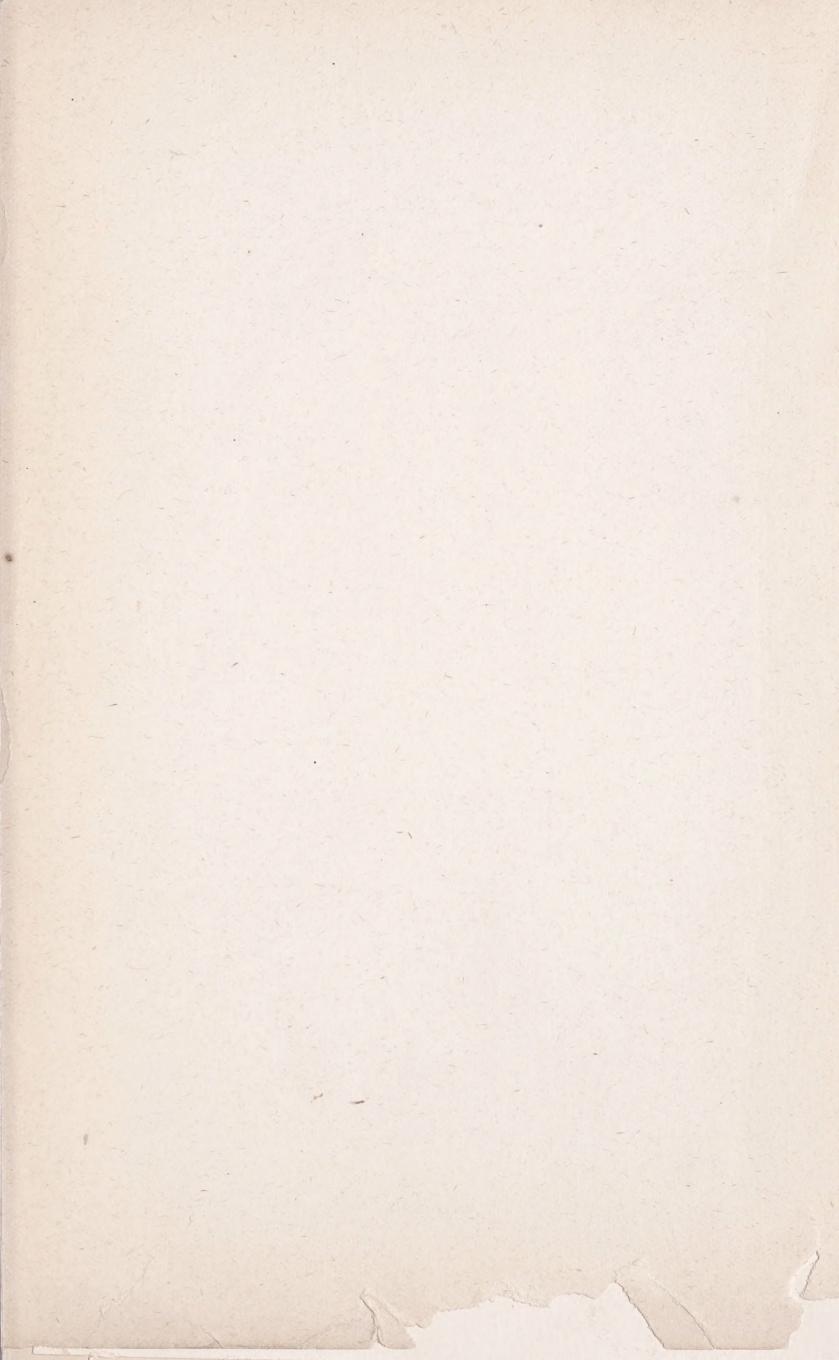
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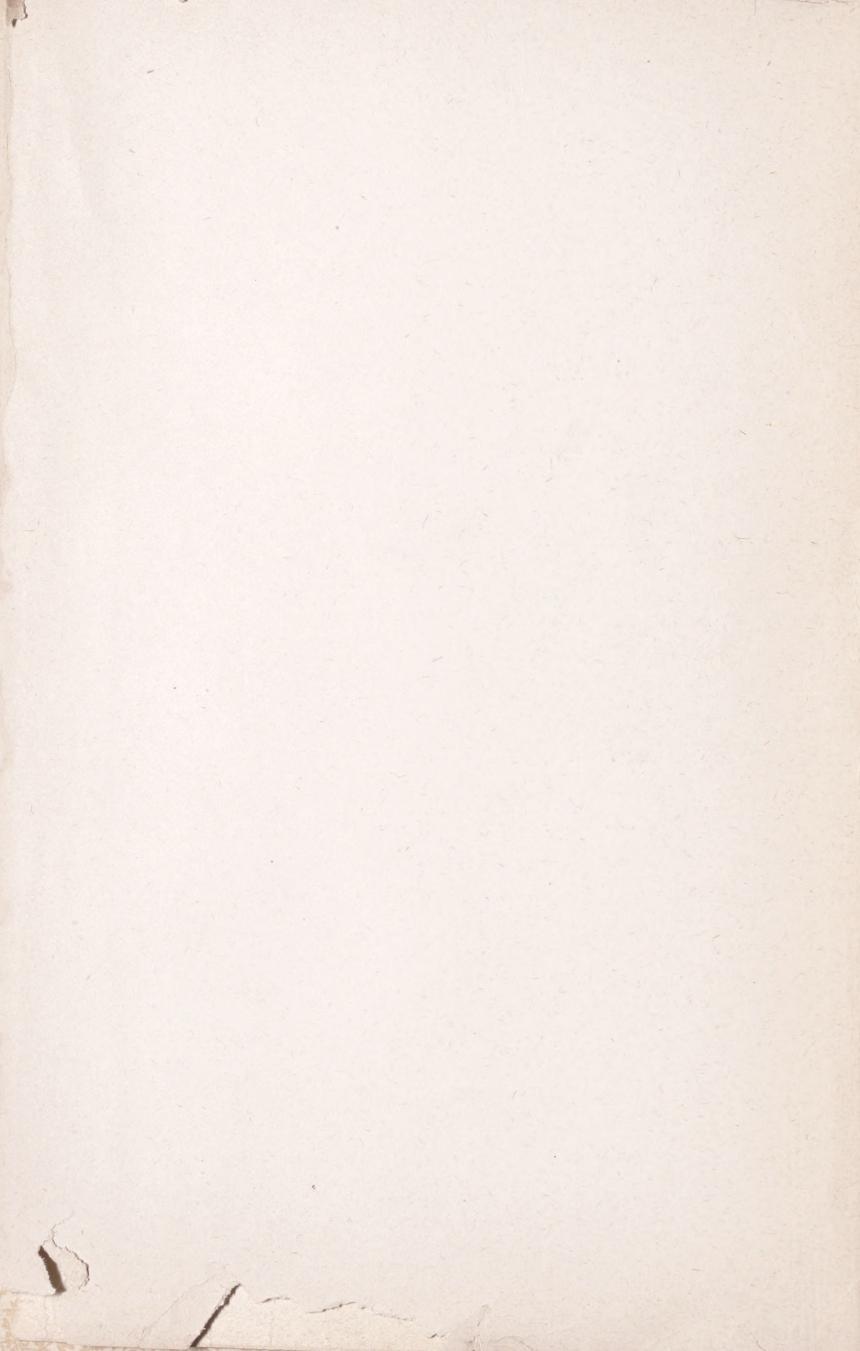
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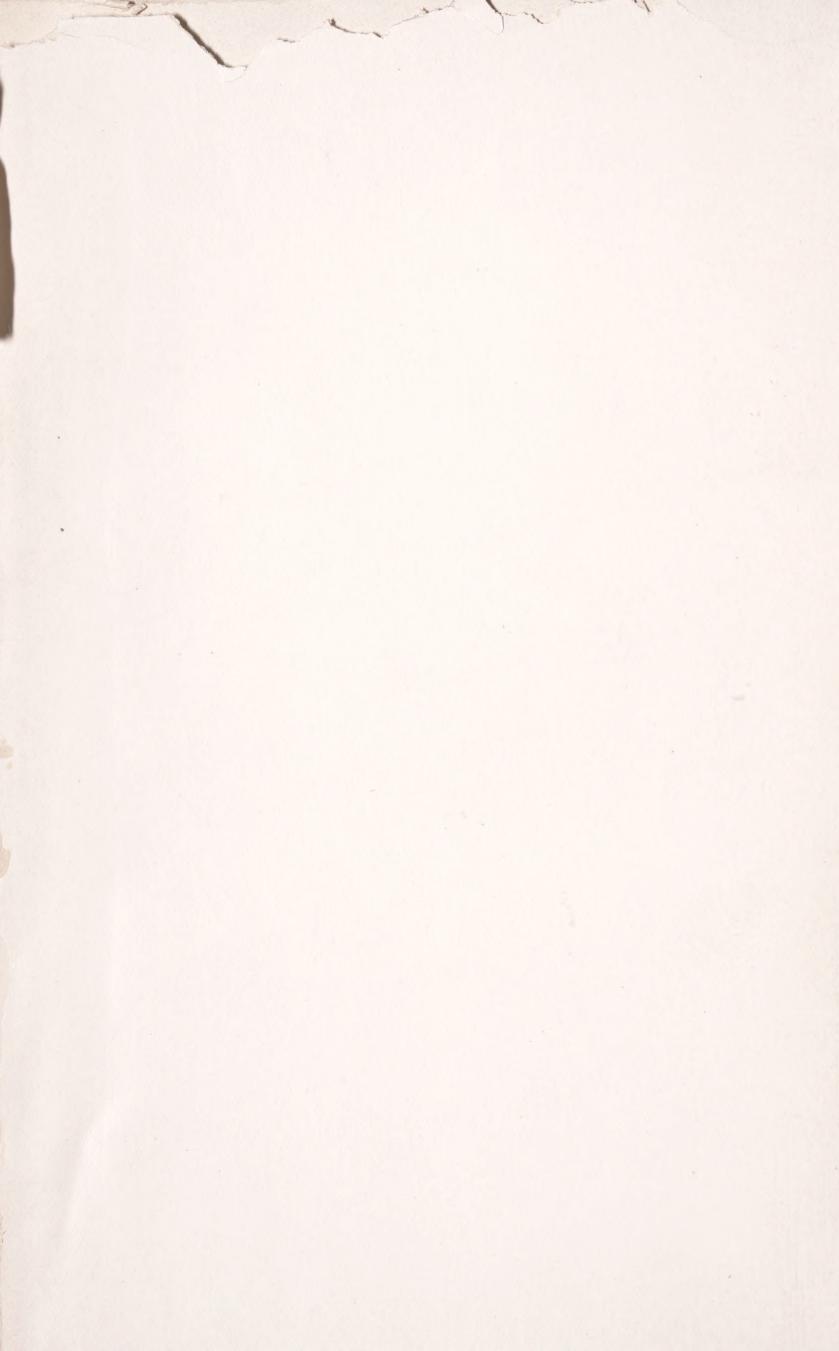








In The Pine Woods. Frontispiece.



IN THE PINE WOODS.

REV. T. L. BAILY.



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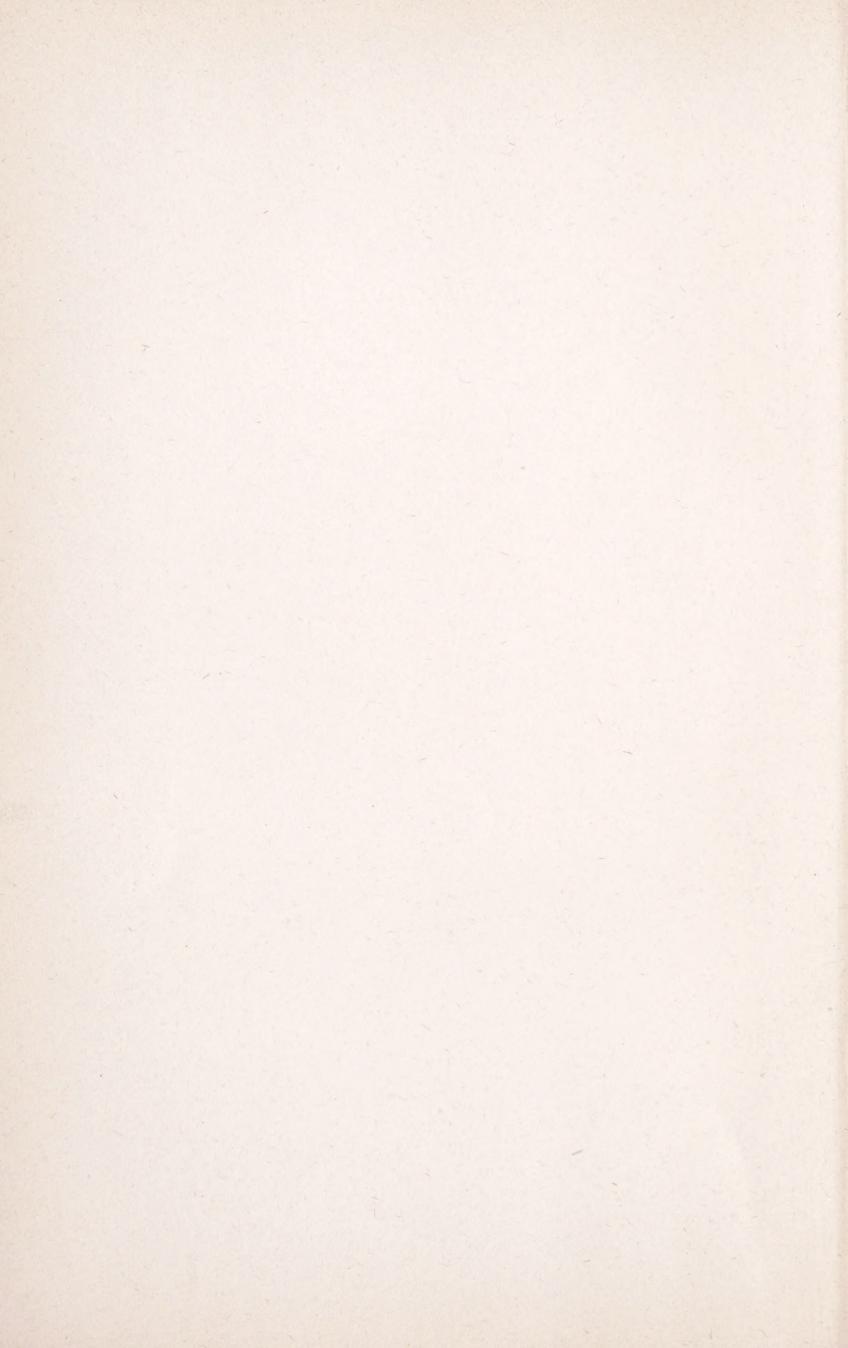
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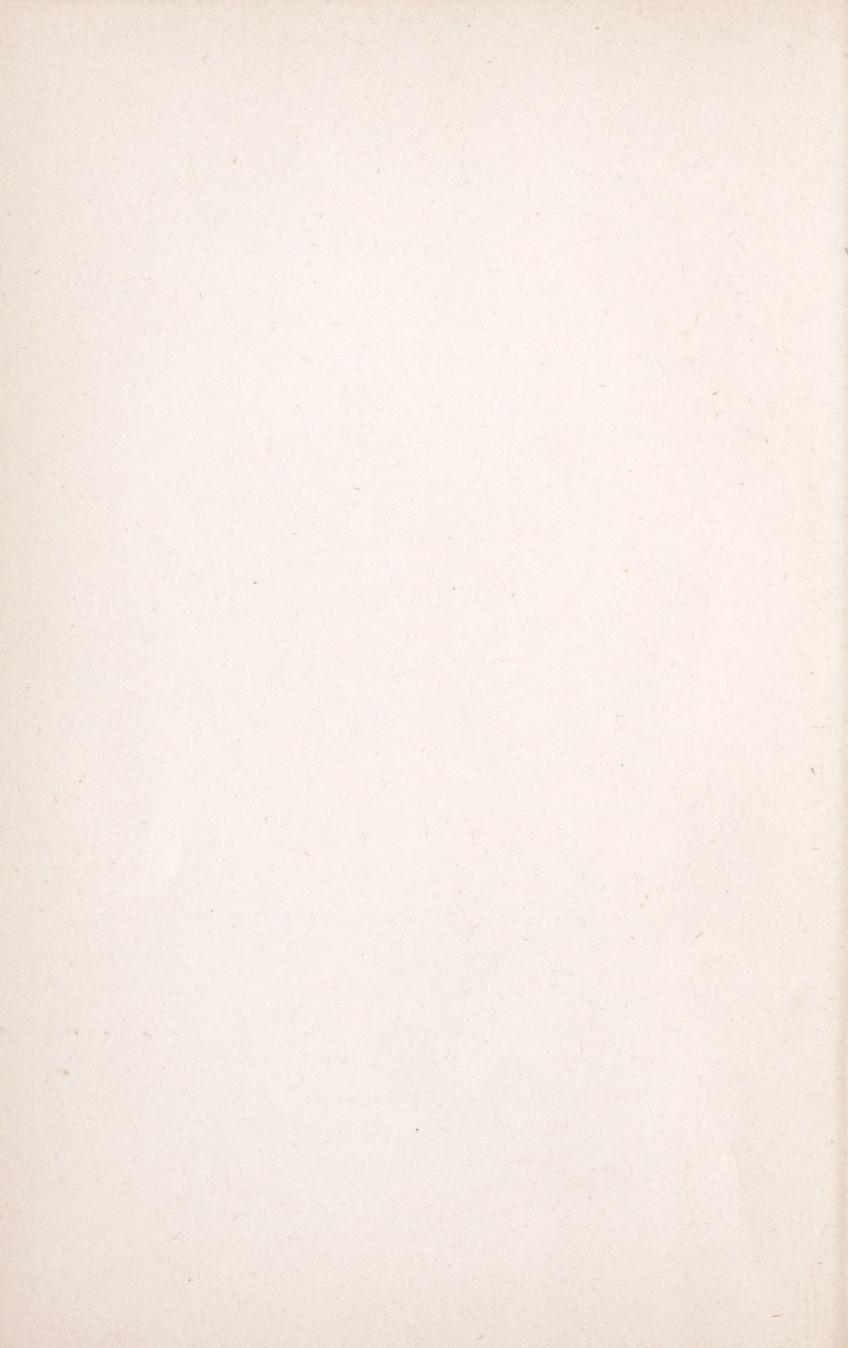
PRELUDE.

"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."

I COR. I: 27-29.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

MATT. 25:40.



IN THE PINE WOODS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"Ere the evening lamps are lighted And like phantoms grim and tall Shadows from the fitful firelight Dance upon the parlor wall."

It was at just such an hour as Longfellow describes in his "Footsteps of Angels" when, gathered round the open-grate fire, upon which some lumps of soft coal were brightly burning, shedding a mellow radiance through the room, we see a family group. The gas had not yet been lighted, and mother, two daughters, and a niece—who for four years had been "one of them"—were earnestly discussing some interesting household matter.

It had been a dreary day; from early morning the snow had been falling in heavy flakes, till sidewalks and streets were coated with several inches of "most disagreeable slush." March had proved to be cold and stormy, and this was the twenty-sixth day of his blustering reign.

"Oh! how I wish it was real spring-time. I really believe the almanacs ought to place March among the winter months, there is so little approach to warm weather. I am tired of so much snow and mud."

"Well, dear, if father should conclude to move southward, most likely you would see much less of such weather as to-day has been."

Just at this moment the conversation was suddenly interrupted by the newsboy's cry:

"Here's the extra 'Herald.' Got full account of the railroad accident! Extra 'Herald'!"

"Oh, mother! I wonder where it can be. Shall I get a paper and find out?"

"You may, dear; but the papers are full of such things that do not amount to very much after all. I have lost all confidence in their reports, they are so exaggerated!"

"There, he is calling again 'Extra Herald!'" and Winnie Dalton hurried to the door and quickly returned with the paper.

"Here it is, 'A train on the K—— and W—— road broke through a bridge last night about six miles from Rondo. Fortunately no one was seriously injured, though some delay was occasioned to the train. No further particulars have come to hand."

"That was the road your father and Willie were to pass over. I hope they are safe."

"Do you not think, mother, that we ought to get a telegram from papa? A whole day since it occurred, and no word from him!"

"It is not always possible to get telegrams off when anything occurs like this; perhaps they are not near a station."

"But if the newspapers could get word, I think we ought to be able, unless papa did not think we would hear about it and did not want to let us know."

A ring at the door-bell started Miss Winnie again to the front.

"Oh here it is, a telegram! It is from papa.

"'Rondo, Thursday.

"' All safe. Will write to-morrow.

'DALTON.'"

"Well, that is short; but after all it is as much as we could expect. I am glad they are safe. No doubt that means they were unhurt."

Let us see just whom we are talking about. We know one by name—Miss Winnifred Dalton, or Winnie, as she was always called by all who knew her—then a younger sister Cora, and a niece, Miss Effie Lane, and the matronly lady sitting in an easy arm-chair in front of the fire whom we have heard addressed as "mother." It was a beautiful picture of a home group. Mrs. Dalton was somewhat of an invalid. Such wea-

ther as this was very trying to her strength, and often she had wished for a milder clime as her home; but she never repined, and not a murmur ever escaped her lips. But the conversation this evening had started afresh the thought that such a thing as a realization of her wishes might be possible.

"Mother, do you think father has any idea of going to that out-of-the-way place he was talking about? I could not endure it for even a week, I am sure."

"Indeed, my dear, I cannot tell; but you know he has only gone to see what the prospects are, and it will be time enough to think about our going when he returns and makes his report to the company. I am quite willing to leave it all to him; he will do nothing unless it will be for our good."

"It might be nice for a little while to be where there was neither snow nor ice, but it must be terribly hot in summer-time. I wonder what the people do when it gets real hot."

"Perhaps, Winnie, when father comes home he can tell us; though it will not be very warm, I think, while he is there—this time at least."

"Oh dear! somehow I do not care to think about it. I wonder if they have any parties or sociables there, such as we have had this winter. I wish I knew what kind of a place it is."

"Auntie," interposed Miss Effie Lane at this point in the conversation, "Auntie, perhaps there might be some opportunity for missionary work in that neighborhood. Did I not hear uncle say they were a rather uncultivated set of people that lived where those mines were situated?"

"That is just you, Effie; you ought to be a real missionary and go to the savages in New Zealand or some of the South Sea Islands."

"I have no doubt I might find plenty to do in those far-away places," Effic replied, "but I think there may be some work for me nearer home. Perhaps you are right, Winnie. I ought to be a missionary, and if uncle does take us to some wonderfully destitute country, I may find there all the work I am fit for; and you too may become interested. It will be a change for us all, and from auntie down how delightful it would be to be doing good all the while."

"Did I not say you were a little enthusiast? I hope for your sake some opportunity will be afforded you. I do not care to have any greater strain on my patience than I have had for the past year; yet I suppose there are some things a person must occasionally do that are not altogether pleasant."

"Now, Winnie, I do not believe you are giving vent to your true feelings on this matter.

Wait till the time comes, and I think you will enter into any work that may open before us. I suppose there will be a few families at least living near us with whom we will be associated on some kind of terms, not socially perhaps, yet what you would call 'on speaking acquaintance.'"

"Oh dear, you are getting too near this thing, as though it was already an established fact. I only think of it as a mere possibility—not even a probability. Do let us talk of something else."

What, we may ask, did Miss Winnifred Dalton have that seemed to tax her patience so severely? A few words in the course of a conversation about a week previous to the time we have thus met with them will partially reveal it.

"I tell you just what it is, Effie: for my part I find my Sunday-school class of six little heathen about as much as I can manage. Sometimes I feel like turning them over to you, only I know you have your hands full already."

Winnie was one of those girls who want to do something, yet have not the courage to press through the discouragements or difficulties that of necessity environ every good work. Oftentimes she would return home on Sunday afternoon, and going up to her room indulge in a hearty cry, and would conclude it was all folly for her to try to do anything with "those unruly

boys." Yet, when Sunday came round again, she would be found at her accustomed seat and would greet with a smile her "six little heathen."

Winnie Dalton was a type of many a young Christian professor. She had entered into covenant with her Lord, but she did not realize the full surrender and consecration of time and talents to her Saviour that her cousin Effie believed in as the duty and privilege of every one who entered the vast field of labor for the Master.

Mr. Dalton had promised to write, and while we are waiting for the letter we may as well know the cause of this journey.

Just at this time there had been considerable interest excited regarding some mines that were reported as valuable at one time but had for some reason latterly been abandoned. To examine one of these localities and determine its value as an investment, Mr. Dalton had been selected as a competent person for the responsible duty. He had a reputation as a scientist as well as a mining engineer, and upon his judgment some men of capital had determined to rely. If he decided for the purchase, it was to be made; if not, it was to be abandoned.

How much of this world's goods will men who are possessed of them risk upon the advice of one man in whom they place confidence, if there is a prospect of gain to accrue from it! The men of millions trusted Hugh Dalton because they believed him to be a true man and honest in his undertakings, and were willing to invest of their solid cash if he pronounced the prospect good. Yet some of these very men would not invest a single dollar in opening the richest mine—the blessed Word of God—or giving freedom to the pent-up truths of this most precious of books. Why? They had not learned the difference between the treasures of earth and those of heaven. They were following the example of the covetous, foolish man who could say as he gloated over his gathered harvests, "Soul, take thine ease."

Hugh Dalton was a believer in the immortality of the soul, but his confidence was not drawn from the same source as that of his wife. He believed man to be of a higher order of being than the brutes, consequently he argued there must be some future for human beings which would be shared alone by them. He could reach thus far into "the mysterious," but here at the threshold he stopped, while his wife's faith carried her across the temporal chasm into the world of unseen realities, where her Lord was revealed to her as the one all-wise, all-powerful, and merciful. "Where my Father is, there shall I be at last," she said; this was her hope and stay. And her confidence was well

grounded: she trusted not in herself, her good works or correct life, but in the atoning sacrifice of her glorified Saviour.

The evening was passed in pleasant interchange of thought and forming of plans for a change of home, should such an event prove to be desirable. Yet there was a lingering hope perhaps in the mind of each one that the necessity might not arise. In this Mrs. Dalton was passive, satisfied whichever way the scale might turn.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE WOODS.

It was a journey of about nine hundred miles from the little town of Westford to the almost unsettled neighborhood where those mines were located, and the railroad accident alluded to occurred quite near the station from which Mr. Dalton sent the short telegram.

There was quite a rush at the office, many passengers being anxious to send despatches home to their friends; and the trainmen also had numerous orders to be transmitted or received. It was not an unexpected reply that Mr. Dalton received to his question, "Can I send a telegram at once?"

"Yes, if you will make it short."

And make it short he did, much to the amusement of the operator, who said, "You are used to this kind of work. I will put it through at once."

As soon therefore as the relief train arrived the passengers were carried onward, and at a little way station Mr. Dalton and his son alighted, as it was from here they would have a wagonride of a few miles to the spot they were in search of. Previous to starting he wrote home giving an account of the journey thus far and its mishaps and delays.

It was towards evening when they reached the little collection of tumble-down houses gathered around a dilapidated structure once known as "the mill," but which long since had ceased to claim any title to the name. A ride of ten miles in a rough box-wagon over a road on which it would have been unsafe to drive a light vehicle of any description brought them to the spot.

"Good for dyspepsia, this," remarked Mr. Dalton after an unusually hard jolt. "I do not believe you know much of what that is."

"Dunno, but s'pose it may be something you have up your way. We have snakes and alligators round here. Is it anything like them?"

Mr. Dalton could hardly repress a laugh at the mistake their driver had made, but he succeeded, only to give vent to a hearty one as he and Willie talked it over when by themselves in the evening.

They had but little encumbrance in the way of baggage, as no very lengthy stay was contemplated, and all there was could be quite readily handled.

"Here is 'the shanty' we have fixed up for you. My good woman will do your cooking if she can suit you. We don't have very much

up here in the woods, for we do not need it, and could not get it if we did."

Such was the welcome Mr. Dalton and Willie had as they halted at what was a veritable shanty, as it was termed. Some of the old lumber that had lain on the ground for years had been sorted out, and all that was not too rotten to bear its own weight had been made to do service again. The present owner of the property had four houses, if they could be called by the name, put up to accommodate some families living there who had been at work cleaning up the ruins, his expectation being that a purchaser might be found for the whole or at least a part of the tract. Many inquiries had lately been made concerning the mines in this region; they were reported as valuable, only needing energy and capital to render them productive.

It seems necessary to weave these few threads into our narrative at the commencement, that we may fully realize the surroundings and why Mr. Dalton came to be on his present mission. This was not a name he gave to it, though already at his home it was spoken of as missionary ground.

"All right, sir," replied Mr. Dalton to the remark we have just listened to. "I think we can eat almost anything you have, for a while at least. Let me have that satchel; set it down here.

We will look around a little before we decide what to do with it. It looks as if it might be as dry outside as it may be inside, should there be a good shower."

"You are right there, sir; these boards will not turn much water, but we did the best we could."

"Does not Mr. Mears live here? He owns the place, I think."

"Yes, he owns it, but lives on the other side of the mountain. He is away, but expects to be back in a day or two. He said there would be some one here to look around, and that was the reason I met you at the railroad. I had been waiting a whole day for you."

"All right; it will not take long to see all there is to be seen, so far as I can judge now."

"Walt, bring the folks along to supper; it is ready."

A call in these words from the open doorless cabin a short distance away suddenly interrupted the conversation at this point; and with sharpened appetites on account of the jolting ride, the visitors followed their guide to the opening in the side of the cabin from whose smoky precincts was wafted the odor of fried bacon and corn-bread. There was not much ceremony in being seated, but Mr. Dalton was unprepared for that which followed: "Say, stranger, we are rather rough out here in the woods, but will you just ask the blessing before we begin to eat?"

Hugh Dalton was dumb at his request. He had never asked a blessing at his own table, though he had listened to the thanksgiving for daily mercies from the lips of his wife's pastor when he would be their guest. At other times only the silent aspirations of each heart would ascend from those who felt they owed their blessings to a bountiful heavenly Provider. Yes, he was dumb for a moment, then answered,

"It is very well, sir," remembering it was the preacher's duty at home. "Our pastor does it, but I would not like to do it here."

"Very well, sir; then I must do it myself;" and this was what Mr. Dalton listened to:

"Good Lord, bless us, and these strangers too, and bless this corn-bread and bacon as we eat them. Amen."

Hugh Dalton had listened to "grace" at many a table surrounded by cultivated, intelligent people. He had heard thanksgivings uttered in the most elaborate style commingled with many an unnecessary phrase, but never in a more sincere manner or with more heartfelt language. "A diamond in the rough!" was his mental exclamation, and he partook of the food with a degree of thankfulness seldom experienced.

Supper finished, they strolled about until nightfall admonished them to repair to their cabin to explore. It contained few of the comforts, indeed scarcely the necessaries, of a home, yet some things that were lacking their baggage supplied, and their rubber blankets were equal to the emergency. The copious rains of the past two weeks had thoroughly saturated everything, and there were but few dry articles in the only habitable room there was. A door was provided to this room, but was both hingeless and latchless. Mr. Dalton was accustomed in the prosecution of his profession to "camping out," and his son had seen some of the milder forms of such a life; so wrapping themselves in their blankets they prepared for a moderately comfortable night's rest, though they could see the stars peeping through the cracks in the roof over them. They did not see them very long, for sleep spread a film over their eyes and shut out all the busy world till the brightening eastern horizon awakened them to greet returning day, a day to be full of work.

"Good morning, sir. I forgot to ask your name last evening. I had Mr. Mears in my mind and lost my good manners," was Mr. Dalton's greeting to his friend of the previous evening.

"No one hurt, I guess. We all know each

other down here, and I'm not ashamed of my name; it's Jones, Walter Jones, and my wife is Kitty Jones. She is a very fair kind of a woman. We've lived round these spots for over twenty years, ever since we were married. We have eight children, wild sort of youngsters, but we have no trouble with them. We just let them run and they get along. I have your name down on paper; Mr. Mears gave it to me. Mr. Dalton, I think. Am I right?"

"Yes, sir, that is it. Now what have you to show me to-day?"

"Anything you wish to see. Mears said I was to show you all over the place, and to dig anywhere you wanted me to. We have been digging on the far side of this hill, and were going to start another hole a little farther on some time this week."

"Did you find anything where you were digging? What kind of stones did you come across?"

"Well, I can't say what you would call them. Mears says it is iron, but it does not look much like it."

"All right. I suppose you have something for us to eat this morning before we commence work; this air make us feel hungry."

"To be sure we have, if corn-bread and bacon will do again; we will try to get something else for dinner."

The same programme for the breakfast as for the previous meal, and Mr. Dalton was beginning to feel as if he had one man at least to deal with who in his outward life acknowledged the Source of all good. "I will test him to-day and see if it is real or only assumed for the occasion." The test was made and proved eminently satisfactory.

Breakfast over, these two men, with Willie, started for the mines. They had not far to walk, only half a mile: but distance did not seem to enter into the calculation of these settlers when speaking of localities. "Just here," or "only over there," might mean a few rods or as many miles. It was through a virgin pine forest their route lay. Seldom was the woodman's axe heard ringing amid these solitudes. No road was there, only a path, and that but little trodden.

"How many people are there living around you beside your family? I have seen no one yet. I suppose the men who are working live here, do they not?"

"Yes, most of them do. But over the mountain there is quite a settlement. There is a church, and smart kind of a preacher too. You do not hear any swearing when he is about."

"I suppose he would be rather hard on any of his people, then, if thev were caught lying or cheating or stealing." "You may be sure he would. There was Sam Peters who wanted to sell an old horse he owned. He had him doctored up and took him to the railroad and sold him to one of the new hands there. He got twenty dollars for him, and he was not worth as many cents, unless it was for his hide. He got found out and had to give the money back, and what a lashing the preacher gave him the next Sunday!"

"I suppose the preacher thought he was not shrewd enough to get rid of his old horse without warranting him sound and gentle. Was that it?"

"See here, stranger, we are not that kind of folks here. A fellow has got to be honest, if he does keep poor. The Lord knows whether a horse is sound or not, and he pays up some time or other, whether a fellow gets off now with his cheating or not. You may stake your last dollar on that."

"I will still keep my eyes open," thought Mr. Dalton. "All the people may not ask a blessing at their meals or think the Lord knows each event of their daily life."

The first place visited that morning did not prove to be very encouraging in what it revealed, and it was on that account Mr. Mears had suggested trying at another spot where work had been carried on some years before. Some of

the rough unsightly stones lying around on the first spot showed traces of iron, though in very limited quantity; but at this second opening the quick eye of Mr. Dalton discovered just what he was seeking for, and picking up a stone he asked,

"Do you find much of this kind of rock around here?"

"Yes, sir; over there," pointing to a heap that had been lately thrown out of the hole they were excavating, "there is plenty of it. Is it worth anything? Mears says there is iron in it. Do you think there is?"

"Most likely there is some. I cannot say how much. Are there any other such holes through the woods as the one you are working at? How is it, Mr. Jones?"

The title of "Mr." was rather startling, but passed unnoticed.

"Yes, sir, plenty of them."

"Very well, let me see some of them."

No need for us to follow these men on their tour of exploration. At every opening they visited there were indications of a bountiful supply on the surface, yet these gave no assurance of the existence of a paying quantity still unmined.

It was a hard day's tramping, and long before dark Mr. Dalton had his writing materials spread

out upon the smoothest board he could find, and penned the following letter home:

"UP IN THE WOODS.
"March 30, 18—.

"MY DEAR WIFE AND FAMILY:-You will want to know where we are and what we are doing. The heading to this letter is the best description of locality. We are literally 'in the woods.' I cannot give any decided opinion as to the value of this tract, and think it will take some further exploration to form a correct judgment. It looks favorable, but surface indications are sometimes very deceptive. You know they often are in people, and I find they are when we come to examine old mother earth. I have come across a man here who interests me much, but surface indications in him may prove misleading. If the ground should prove to be as true as he gives promise of being, I think we may strike some bargain between the present owner and the company. I wrote to Mr. Hamilton today, and will await a reply from him; this will necessitate our remaining here a week longer at least, perhaps more. Willie stands our rough life pretty well, even if the stars do wink at him as he lies wrapped in his rubber blanket at night fast asleep.

"Good-by. Love to all.
"Your husband, "H. D."

This letter, accompanying one to Mr. Hamilton, who represented the company formed for the purpose of purchasing the tract, was sent to the railroad station to be mailed. In the business letter Mr. Dalton said:

"The expenditure of a few hundred dollars would settle the question as to the value of the land. If the ore is abundant, the value is great. If on the contrary it is not in sufficient quantity to pay for working, I would not give ten dollars for the whole thousand acres."

A week elapsed ere the answer came. In the interim Mr. Mears had returned home and he and Mr. Dalton had been all over the ground. Mr. Mears seemed very candid in his reasons for wishing to sell. He owned the adjoining tract upon which he resided, but had no capital to work with for developing the mines. "If I can sell this tract I can go to work upon the other and see what it is worth."

"Very fair, sir, indeed, very fair; but we must know first what the real state of this mine is. If it is as good as you represent, will you join me in sinking a shaft at least one hundred feet? I will be at one-half the expense, and if I conclude to purchase, the price shall be the one you have named; if I decline, then I lose my money and leave you in possession of all the information we have obtained. Is not this fair?"

"Very likely it is, but how much will it cost to sink a 'shaft,' as you call it, so deep as one hundred feet?"

"Indeed, sir, I can hardly say. Very much would depend upon the proficiency of the men employed and the amount of wages you would have to pay them. If I were at home I should set it down as about five hundred dollars, but here it might not cost nearly so much."

"That seems pretty steep. I do not believe I could raise half that in cash. I might get credit for the provisions and furnish them for my share, if you would provide the money for tools and whatever would be needed of that kind and pay the men their wages."

"All right. I will do it if we can go to work at once; I have no time to lose. We may not spend half that much, for I shall probably decide very quickly whether to buy the land or to give up."

Mr. Dalton had already seen sufficient to warrant this proposition, even without direct orders, and the following day energetic work was commenced. But little headway downward was made during the first week. Getting ready, cutting timbers for the shaft as it should progress, clearing away a spot where he intended to operate, some three hundred yards from either of the "holes" yet dug—thus the week

passed. Then word was received, short but to the point:

"Go ahead. Spend a thousand dollars if necessary, only do not give up until you are thoroughly satisfied there is nothing in it."

From home came the cheering word, "We are all well."

CHAPTER III.

FIRST EFFORTS.

"How great a matter a little fire kindleth!" JAMES 3:5.

WE sometimes hear of persons being born with certain predilections hovering over them. When any one seems to exhibit a fondness and adapation for any certain kind of work we are apt to say such a one was a "born sculptor" or whatever the case may be. Whether this can be true, we need not pause to argue. Our starting-point is plainly stated: Miss Effie Lane was not "a born missionary," neither was her mother before her. Indeed it may reasonably be doubted whether there had been any missionary spirit manifested in the family for some generations back. Whence came it now?

We must go back a year or two, yes, four of them. Mrs. Charlotte Lane was a woman of the world. Not any more so than many another who owns a pew in the most fashionable church in the city or town where she resides, and who makes it a point to be always seen occupying it at least once on each Sunday, unless rain or heat or cold or some such obstacle should afford an excuse for neglect of this duty.

Mrs. Lane was never remiss in her regular contribution for the expenses of the church, but when any announcement had been previously made of a collection to be taken for the Foreign Missionary Society she was seldom found in her pew.

"We have quite enough to do in taking care of the heathen who come to our shores by the shipload, without sending any money or missionaries to them in their own land. I do not believe in it all."

It was something in this way she quieted her conscience if any misgivings arose in her mind as to the correctness of her action, and if at any time she was present when, unannounced, an appeal for help for the foreign field was made, she would rather grudgingly drop a small coin into the basket. In home mission work her interest did not rise very much higher; but out of deference to her well-known antipathy to the foreign branch she was willing to have her name appear as a regular contributor to the "Home Mission Circle," though by no means in proportion to her outward means.

Such was the home influence and training that Effie Lane received. It was not lost upon her, but became a part of her character. Although deep-rooted, it was by no means too firmly so to be dislodged. God uses the little things of

earth to overturn the mighty, and sometimes even a single word may cause the scale to turn.

To Effie Lane the word came. Gently a work was laid upon her life by a mysterious working of Providence. We sometimes attribute an unexpected event to this source when perhaps it may be the outcome of some act of our own; but here we may see the direct interposition of the divine hand clearly manifested, and just as clearly discerned and obeyed, though it was brought about by instrumental means.

We have intimated that Effie Lane had been for four years an inmate of her uncle's household. Her mother on returning from a ride slipped in alighting from her carriage and sustained a severe injury to her spine, from which she never recovered, and in less than a year Effie was left motherless. Her father relinquished housekeeping and went to some foreign land, leaving his only child well provided for in her uncle's family.

The loss of her mother made a deep impression on Effie's mind, and for a time she seemed to be inclined to be melancholy and would mingle but little in the pleasures her cousins enjoyed. Her aunt feared for the ultimate effect this might have upon her health, and to divert her thoughts from herself she suggested her taking some part in the work of the

Sunday-school, not particularly as a teacher, but as general helper, assisting at the organ and in the singing, for both of which she was well qualified.

To fill up the dull Sunday, as she called it, she assented, and was cordially welcomed by Mr. Reynolds, the superintendent, and soon her efficiency was fully appreciated.

"Miss Lane, would you not like to assist Miss Wilson in the primary department? She sadly needs some one to help her in preserving order, and you can do a great deal in leading the singing. She has asked for your help."

"Do you think, Mr. Reynolds, that I could do any good there? I am willing if you desire it."

"Thank you. I do really wish it, and have been wondering whom to ask that would be capable. Miss Wilson suggested you. Will you accompany me into the other room at once? I will introduce you to Miss Wilson if you are not already acquainted." And Effie Lane took the first real step in work for Jesus, though she did not recognize it under that name.

It was "missionary Sunday" in that room, and Miss Wilson was engaged telling the hundred and fifty little ones gathered before her of the boys and girls in heathen lands who had no Sunday-school to go to, no kind teachers to

tell them the sweet story of Jesus, and no beautiful hymns to sing of his love and wonderful care. Very opportune was it for Miss Effic to come in at that moment, and as soon as the introduction was over she was welcomed by Miss Wilson.

"How very kind it is in you, Miss Lane, to be willing to help me. I have frequently wished I knew you well enough to ask you to do it; but Mr. Reynolds offered to act for me." Such was the greeting Miss Wilson gave to one who from that day became interested, deeply so, in a work she had previously looked upon as useless.

"I have just been telling the children of a little heathen girl in the far-away land of idols and ignorance who, when she heard of Jesus, told her teacher that she wanted to go to him right away, for she knew he would love her and would not beat her as her mother did. Poor little thing, she had no peace or comfort at home, and thought if Jesus was so good and kind to the people who came to him he would be kind to her. I told them how we sent teachers away from their happy homes in our land to carry the Bible and its treasures to the poor people, and now we must try and do all we can to take care of them after they have gone. This is what we call 'our missionary day.'" Then turning again to the children, she asked,

"What is our missionary day for, children? you know that this is the last Sunday in the month, and we always do something special today. What is it?"

"We bring our missionary pennies."

"Very well, now let me see whether we have all done so. All who have their pennies may hold up their hands. You see I hold mine up."

What could Effie Lane do? Should she say, "Miss Wilson, I do not think there is any good to be gained by this collection; it seems to me like wasting money that might be put to a better use"? Did she say this? No, indeed, though there might have been a feeling a short time since somewhat akin to it; but as she saw the hands raised all over the room—perhaps quite as many as you could count heads—her hand, never before raised to vote money for the heathen, went up also. There was more than a penny in it, and a heart went up with it too. One little girl held up both hands, and when asked why, answered, "I got two pennies, one for each hand."

There was no mistaking the earnestness with which Miss Wilson had entered upon this work. It had not been the practice of her predecessor in this department, but when she took charge of it one of her first efforts was directed to thus instilling into the minds of these little ones

doing something for Jesus by helping to make his name known among those who had never heard it. She believed that if we love him we shall want others to love and know him also.

Thus once in each month "missionary Sunday" came round, and to-day, as usual, at the close of the regular exercises the pennies were gathered in. Miss Wilson then handed to each of the scholars as they passed out of the room a little illustrated paper.

"Will you have one, Miss Lane? I think you may find something interesting in it; I always read it with pleasure and seldom without profit, I am so much interested in our foreign missionaries. Only last year we raised sufficient in this room to support one of the 'Bible-readers' in Burmah. You know it does not require very much to support a native and we are trying to raise enough to pay for two this year."

"Excuse my ignorance, but what do you mean by 'Bible-readers'? Can any of those heathen read our Bible?"

"Indeed they can, but not in our language. It has been translated into many of the different languages spoken in those countries—I cannot tell you exactly how many—but these women who have learned to read the Bible in their native tongue are employed to read it to others who have never either seen or heard of it.

They do a wonderful amount of good, and that is our reason for trying to help them. Are you not interested in this work?"

"Not to any extent. I have never thought there was much use in it. My mother used to say we had enough to do to take care of foreigners after they came to our shores, without trying to do anything before they came."

"Oh what a mistake! Pardon me for saying so, for I am sure your mother must have thought she was right; but there are millions of men, women, and children who will never hear of Jesus unless some one goes to their homes to tell them of him. Sometimes I wish I could go, but as I cannot, I try to do the best I can by helping any one who is willing to go."

But while these two new friends are talking the sexton is going his rounds closing the windows, and as he reaches those nearest where they stand they move towards the door. Here they are met by Mr. Reynolds, who pleasantly asks,

"How did your new assistant make out today, Miss Wilson? I do not remember hearing any extra amount of singing, though generally you have quite sufficient, so far as the quiet of our room is concerned. How was it?"

"All right, sir, I think. If there was less singing we had an extra amount of good work. Just look at that," holding up her handkerchief with one corner tied over a goodly collection of silver and baser coin. "Yes, and they are not all pennies either. We will have our two Bible-readers another year, you may rest assured of that. Miss Lane has as good as promised her help in this as well as in the singing. Am I right, Miss Lane?"

"I will try another Sunday at least, but you know it is all so new to me. I may not prove to be as much assistance to you as you expect. But as I said, I can try."

"That will be all right. One Sunday at a time is all I try to get through with; each one proves to be a step to something more. You are wating for us to go; excuse me, Mr. Henry. I will not detain you longer."

For two blocks the two ladies walked in company and then parted. We need not know all that passed between them. Miss Wilson felt sure she had gained an important point in thus drawing to her assistance one who had so much time at her command and somewhat of this world's goods that she could use as her heart might prompt. Miss Lane felt as if she had stepped into another world, or at least into an entirely different part of the one she had been living in. In the morning the idea of Miss Effie Lane helping a foreign missionary was as foreign to her mind as the poor heathen were to her thoughts. Yet

later in the day she had dropped the first silver coin that had ever passed from her hand into God's channel for evangelizing the world.

Still she felt no consecration to the work. Her heart had prompted the act, and the full importance of it was not realized, though a glimpse may have been given her of what it might be. She returned home, the chief event of the afternoon filling her thoughts.

"What do you think, auntie, I gave a half-dollar to a missionary collection at the Sunday-school! Every little chick had a penny or two, and those who had contributions were asked to hold up their hands. Well, they did not mean me; but I felt as if I should join them, and of course I held mine up, and I could not give less than fifty cents. Did I do right, auntie?"

"Certainly, Effie, you did. Only I hope you did not give it fearing lest you would be thought mean or stingy if you did not."

"No, indeed, I did not think of that; but somehow it just came into my head to do it, and I am glad I did. You know I act frequently from momentary impulse, and sometimes I know I make mistakes. But Miss Wilson told us—I mean the little boys and girls—of the women who go about reading the Bible to the heathen women; and just to think, that little school supports one of them, I think she said away off in

Burmah! How terrible it must be to go so far away from home and live among such people! Miss Wilson said she would like to go. I could not do such a thing for all the world."

"And I do not believe Miss Wilson would either. It would be no acceptable service if it were to gain the whole world as a compensation. Indeed, there would be no sacrifice in it in that case. But if the love for Jesus is the motive, and to gain the souls of men for him our desire, he gives the reward; and even if it entails the loss of everything in this world, it will have its reward in the eternal world. Perhaps some day you may think so. It would be just like you if you are fully in love with the work. I never wanted to be a missionary, but I have tried to do whatever I could to help them. I think we ought to make sacrifices for the good of others. Do you not think we ought to try to do all we can to help any one less favored than ourselves, whether it comes exactly in the line of our pleasure or not?"

"Yes, auntie, I suppose we ought; but why cannot as much good be done for the poor ignorant people we see around us every day, right here near our homes, as we could do for those in the far-away places whom we never see and know so little about? We can see here just what we are doing, and know how our money and our

time are being used, and whether we are accomplishing anything or not."

"I think there is room for both. I do not think that either ought to be neglected. There are persons peculiarly fitted for one kind of work, while others seem to be drawn in a different direction. Now I think here is a good opening for each of us. You know I am very much interested in our foreign mission work; and how nice it would be if our Effie should prove to be an earnest advocate for the home mission field. You need not lose interest in the subject that Miss Wilson has taken such a strong hold upon, but add your home work to it."

"O auntie! I would not know how to do it at all; I should never succeed; though perhaps I might help some one who was already at work. I am sure by myself I could never do anything right."

"Very likely, and I would not advise you to try; but there are many ways of doing good at home, and I have no doubt you will soon find one of them and the right one too."

Here was a new thought. It was dropped upon Miss Effie Lane's heart and head too that Sunday afternoon. It was but a little word, yet it brought bright and golden impulses which stirred within her under the influence of the Holy Spirit, gently like "the wind blowing where it listeth." We cannot tell whence He cometh, only we know He has come.

As Effie went up to her room to lay aside her wraps she remembered the little paper Miss Wilson had handed her; unfolding it as she took it from her pocket, where it had been placed, the first thing that attracted her attention was the motto, displayed in large type at the head, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Another message lay folded in that paper, and these words were the sum of it.

The great ocean is, after all, only a collection of numberless little drops of water. The solid earth is only a group of little particles of sand. To Effie Lane the great work of a missionary seemed composed of a vast number of little things, each important of itself, a necessary part of the whole and of value beyond measure. Unable to grasp them all, she could hardly tell how many of these grains her hands could hold or which of the shining particles she should try to gather. But one little thing led to another until there was formed in her mind a distinct plan for work, crude at first perhaps, but soon to assume a clear outline and to prove a practical matter in her hands.

At the supper table that Sunday evening

she astonished her uncle by saying, "Uncle Hugh, what would you say if I were to turn out after all to be worth something? I think I can be a sort of home missionary, if I only know just what to do or where to commence."

"Indeed, and what has put such a notion into that little head of yours? I have no doubt you can find plenty to do among the ragged children in our streets. In fact, I wish there was some way of keeping them from begging, and from stealing when they cannot beg what they want."

"What a nice thing it would be to start a ragged-school! There are such schools somewhere, for I have read about them. I wish I knew some one who was interested in such things. Perhaps after all I might not be able to do much, but I would like to make the effort. Do you know any one that can help me?"

"I think I can put you on the right track," replied her aunt. "I will speak to our pastor the next time he calls, and perhaps Miss Wilson can help you. You have promised to assist her, and no doubt she can return the favor. You can ask her next Sunday, and we will see how our separate information will aid you."

Here was the beginning. Not a perfected, well laid out course, but rather a mingling of ideas, wishes, and plans. It was a chaotic world from

which the beauties of Eden sprang, when touched by the divine Hand and directed by the eternal Mind; and why should there not come forth at divine bidding, from the confused ideas and hopes that had possession of the head and heart of Effie Lane, a plan that would help to redeem some portion of that which was lost in the beautiful garden that God planted?

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAST YEAR AT WESTFORD.

It was not very long ere Winnie caught something of the spirit that was prompting her cousin to active work, and at the opening of our story we found her engaged in the Sunday-school with "six little heathen" under her care. She had been thus employed for nearly a year, the results not altogether satisfactory, yet not entirely discouraging. Many a crying spell had she over it, yet she returned to her duties as promptly, if not quite as cheerfully, as the most successful. Effie had entered upon her work with a zeal not to be mistaken for mere enthusiasm. She cherished the thought which that little paper, "Working for Jesus," inspired her with, and through many an hour of perplexity she had passed, yet always found new hope.

It was not in the Sunday-school alone that she found an avenue of usefulness. Upon her own responsibility she had commenced gathering a few of the children of the poorer sort, little girls, into a week-day sewing-class, and this grew into a regular two-afternoons-a-week school. She tried to draw Winnie into this; but a single

visit to the room where they met dispelled all hope of gaining her assistance.

"I could not stand it, Effie. I wonder you do not catch some terrible disease from those dirty children. It is bad enough on Sunday, when they do try to look a little clean; but I never could have anything to do with them on week-days. You must look to some one else to help you; I cannot possibly do it."

"It is just because they are so untidy and forlorn that I am endeavoring to teach them something better. As soon as they learn to sew they will make themselves some new clothes, and then they will look so much better I shall feel quite proud of them."

"You are welcome to all your pride, I am sure. I don't believe it will hurt you if you have nothing more than those children to be proud of."

"No matter; wait till you see some of them dressed up in new clean calico dresses and white aprons, with their hair well combed. I think some of them have beautiful hair, that I know will curl if attention is given to it."

"O, Effie! how can you talk so? It makes me creep all over." And not for the first time did Winnie Dalton shudder at the thought of having any close contact with the poor and neglected children of the lanes and alleys of the town. But Effie went on with her work; the

path was open and she was undismayed. "In-asmuch," etc., was constantly running though her mind.

This was the last year of the sojourn of the Daltons at Westford. The snow had scarcely disappeared from the fields and but little was left in the streets to remind of winter, when letters from Hugh Dalton announced the discovery of some beds of a remarkably rich ore, and he had signed the papers providing for a transfer of the thousand acres to the company that had authorized him to act for them. The necessary examination of titles had been placed in the hands of an experienced party, and he and his son would return home in a few days. In a letter to Mrs. Dalton he said:

"We must now take into consideration the desirability of accepting a liberal offer Mr. Hamilton has made me. If I accept, it may necessivate our removal to this place. If I superintend the work, I must be on the spot all the time. Think about it till I return. Perhaps you can form some plan that will be satisfactory."

So ended the letter, and the home circle did think and plan; they talked and finally let the matter rest unsettled.

We say this was their last year at Westford. It was one of special work for all; but no one seemed to feel the responsibility of a change as

much as Effie. Yet for each one there was something to decide. There would be many things to sacrifice—the pleasures of social life, the varied enjoyments that a town offers in contrast with a sparsely settled country and no congenial neighbors. But there would be the opportunity for missionary work, far greater perhaps than at home. And thus between Winnie Dalton and Effie Lane there were contending thoughts, which clearly revealed the individual characters that were slowly but surely forming for each one.

The family circle, when this last letter was received, seemed to have the subject under calm consideration, as evidenced by one of their evening conversations during the ensuing week.

"Auntie, I do not think uncle means that we must move if he undertakes to superintend the work. Do you not think he only wishes us to think about it, and will leave the matter entirely with us to decide?"

"No, dear. I do not believe your uncle would go so far from us for any length of time. I think if he wishes to act as Mr. Hamilton suggests, he would want us all to be with him. Of course it would not necessitate your leaving here, only I do not know how we could go without you."

"Do not give yourself any uneasiness on that

account. If you go, I will go too. I am one of the family, you know. Father could find me just as readily there as here, if he ever concludes to return to America; so that part is settled in advance. And then, auntie, there is another thing I have thought of: it would be nice after all to try it for a while, everything would be so new and strange. But how could we ever get moved, and where would we live? You know uncle says they have nothing but mere cabins to live in, with holes in the roof that let the stars peep through."

"How romantic that would be!" chimed in Winnie.

"No doubt it would be, daughter, but your father has taken everything into consideration, and I think we will have to await his return before we can do much beside thinking. A few days will probably give us all the particulars."

But we have almost lost sight of the mining region. We have no name by which to distinguish it unless we call it the "Backwoods Camp," for such it certainly seemed to be. Let us see what has taken place there to keep Mr. Dalton three weeks. It has proved to be a much longer visit than he anticipated when he set foot first at the door of his "shanty." His experienced eye detected value in the brownish-red

stones that daily were brought to the surface as the men penetrated towards the "hundred feet;" and to make sure of all that seemed to be within his grasp he concluded to remain until the question was settled for or against the purchase.

The old hut he occupied had been rendered much more comfortable by some wagon-loads of lumber procured from the railroad station and a few important articles of furniture - such as chairs possessed of backs and the usual number of legs, a table that would hold his writing materials, and a lamp that would do better service than the tallow dips which Mrs. Jones provided him with. He had no thought of luxuries, and bare floors were still good enough for him. The weather was warm, so there was no need of any fire. In the way of food he was rather less economical. Mrs. Jones thought him extravagant, but as her household benefited by it, she did not enter any protest. Some canned vegetables, soups, and fruits, and a small tub of butter were added to her larder, and as long as her two boarders provided so liberally, there was less need of the daily ration of bacon and corn-bread, though the latter was not often missing.

While the work was slowly progressing Mr. Dalton made frequent visits to the railroad station, and observing a new house of quite modern

style in course of erection, he arranged with the owner to take the refusal of it when finished at a fair rent. All these movements indicated his purpose to become a resident, for a time at least; but he would, as he intimated, give his family the privilege of deciding.

Just two months from the time that Hugh Dalton said good-by to his family in March Mr. Jones took him and his son back again to the railroad. How different all the surroundings seemed to-day. Then there was hardly a passable road, now the stumps and rocks had been removed and the holes filled up; then only a few miserable cabins at "the camp," now one decent-looking, comfortable house and several others showing signs of recent repair. Old huts had been torn down, and more than one large bonfire had resulted. Huge heaps of brownish stones lay around the mouth of the deep pit that had been dug. All these changes gave evidence of a determined head at work. Could we have spent a few evenings with Mr. Dalton previously to his packing up his baggage to return homeward, we might have wondered at what he was doing as we watched his pen or pencil moving over the large sheets of paper spread out upon his table. Thus his evenings were often spent, and he bore home with him plans in detail for an energetic prosecution of mining iron ore.

Engine house and all the necessary out-buildings, and a furnace for reducing the ore to merchantable iron, were among his expectations, and plans for two rows of small houses for the families of the miners, and a plot marked out for a residence for his own household, should they decide to make it their home. Quite a busy place it looked like spread out upon paper, and hopes were very sanguine that this and more might be accomplished.

There was one thing he had omitted from his plans; perhaps he did not think of it. There was no location selected for a church or a schoolhouse. These may not seem to belong to the business aspect of the matter in hand, yet to insure a peaceful community anywhere they are as . needful as the steam engine is to the working machinery of the enterprise. Hugh Dalton had not given this any consideration. He looked alone at the financial part; yet in this he made no greater mistake than many another has made under similar circumstances. The moral welfare of the working-man is too often made subordinate to the profit and loss account of his employers, when it should fill an important column in the balance sheet of the closing year. Can this be neglected and prosperity ensue? We shall see.

It was the twenty-seventh day of May, to-

wards evening, when the cars steamed into the station at Westford, and Mr. Dalton and Willie stepped from the train to find Winnie and Effie awaiting them. The telegraph had already announced the train and time they might be expected.

"Oh, papa, how glad I am to see you! It does seem so long since you went away; and, Willie dear, how are you? What have you been doing? You are as brown as an Indian."

"I thought Indians were red, Winnie; but I have been working in a Southern sunshine and must have become somewhat tanned. But how are you all? I see Effie is here to speak for herself. How are mother and Cora?"

"All right, I guess; but come home and see." The party—Mr. Dalton and Winnie, and Willie and Effic following—soon reached home, the wanderers receiving a hearty welcome from the two who had remained in the house.

What a happy family they were as they sat around their table to partake of their evening meal, or as they afterwards gathered in their parlor around the open grate, where still glowed a low fire of coals, as it was not yet warm enough to dispense with artificial heat even if the almanac heralded the near approach of summer.

Until a quite late hour did the gas burn that

evening, as the thoughts and tongues of that little group were kept busy with imaginings of the future or the realities of the present.

"Papa dear, did you actually have to sleep in an old hut with holes in the roof large enough to see the stars through? We believed you were only trying to amuse us, for you would have taken terrible colds if it had rained on you. I could never live that way. And could you not get anything to eat but corn-bread and bacon?"

It was the temporal part of the matter that Winnie seemed the most concerned about, and her questions were more directed to the probable discomforts that might be encountered should they all emigrate, as she called it. The varied replies to these and other questions seemed to give each mind a good idea of things as Mr. Dalton found them, as well as, with some help from his imagination, of what it was possible they might be.

Mr. Dalton lost no time in spreading his views, as well as his plans, before the gentlemen in whose interest he had been engaged. He had kept them fully advised of his work as it was being prosecuted, and their plans were already consummated. The stock company had been formed and the requisite capital was subscribed. Now the great question to which they

desired a definite answer was this: "Mr. Dalton, will you go there with your family and undertake the prosecution of this work as superintendent upon the terms we have proposed?"

"I have hardly had sufficient consultation with my family to give a decided answer at present," was his reply, "but we will know before many days. For a while at least I will carry on the work already commenced, until everything is in good running order."

Every day the subject was more or less under discussion at the Dalton home, sometimes during their meals while Mr. Dalton was present, but also during his absence, and the conclusion seemed to be settling in favor of the move.

"Suppose we try it, mother, for a year. I think I could stand it that long, even if we did not find it very congenial. I know it must be terribly disagreeable in summer-time, for papa says we would have to keep out of the sunshine at noon; but that will not be so much after all, for we often have to do that here during July. I really believe I want to see just what living there would be like." Winnie thus seemed to voice the conclusion of the family, and Mr. Dalton informed the company that he was prepared to accept the proposition that had been made to him. He also for the first time mentioned the fact of his having secured the refusal of a house

near the railroad for a year and that it would be ready for occupancy by the first of July. Thus the matter was settled. Mr. Hamilton's offer, as president of the new company, was accepted, and preparations were at once commenced for the change. In due time it came.

CHAPTER V.

CONNECTING LINKS.

"ARE you not terribly tired, mamma? I did not believe it was possible to be so thoroughly wearied as I am with this travelling day and night in the cars. I thought it would be so very nice to live in one of those Pullman palaces for two days; and it is nice, but I would like to put my foot on the ground again, if only for an hour."

"It would be hardly worth while, for we would only have to make a fresh start, and it would be quite as well to keep on now, as we are so near the end. Papa says we will wake up to-morrow morning almost at home."

"Oh, mamma, do not say home; we have left that behind us, and I can never think of any other place as home but that dear old house in Westford. I wonder whether we will ever see it again."

No wonder Cora Dalton felt wearied; perhaps the rest of the party could sympathize with her, though they did not do so by words. For two days they had been domiciled in one of the elegantly furnished cars of the Pullman service, on the through line; and one more night would end their journey.

Cora Dalton, who has not figured much in our story, enlivens us with this question. She clings to her home, the only one she has ever known, and to her it seems as if there could be no other. How many persons grow up and pass away remembering only one spot on earth by that sacred name! We change our place of residence; the young go into other relations of life, gather around them new ties and objects of affection, and even call by the name of home some little spot where their lot may be cast; yet they look back to childhood's day, to the old roof-tree, and around it they group together all that belongs to the preciousness of that little word. "I am going home on a visit," says the bride of a summer. "We are going home to see the old folks," says the father as he places one after another of his children in the stage-coach, and helping his wife to follow them, he mounts to the seat beside the driver, to chat over the scenes of by-gone days. Some people have no home, but like the sea-moss float about as the current may drift, and no matter what or where the shore, it is all alike to them. Pity the man who has no childhood's home!

Leaving a birthplace for the first time is always more or less a moment for earnest thought.

What will the outcome be? pleasure or pain? joy or sorrow? success or disappointment? All these had been duly weighed by the Daltons, each one according to the peculiar temperament of the individual. Mr. Dalton took the dollars and cents view, while his wife took a peep into the future over the joy or sorrow that might be experienced in the new life they would be ushered into among those who would be entire strangers to them all. To Winnie and Effie different emotions seemed to present themselves. One feared the work that she might find awaiting her in her new sphere, while the other was anxiously awaiting the time when she would be permitted to enter upon it.

"How nice it will be to teach the little children, for I am sure there will be some. Did not uncle say the man who drove him over from the railroad had eight of them?"

"Yes; but remember, Effie, we are not going to live at the mines, and I am glad we are not. It is ten miles away, and we may never go out unless it should be to see how rough it is. It must be like some heathen country, and I have had enough contact with such people for a while. But I would like to know how Miss Johnson will manage my six little heathen on Sunday. I think she will have her hands full."

"Suppose we wait until we are settled before

we plan what we will do or leave undone. We cannot tell what our surroundings will be. Only let us be prepared to be content with whatever they are. I think there will be opportunities for each one of us to do something."

"That is just my idea, auntie. I want to be ready for whatever turns up. I know I have been planning; perhaps it may do no harm if all my plans are overthrown. I am sure there will be something else just as good, or even better. I think I once saw a wood-cut representing an ox standing between an altar and a plough, with the motto underneath, 'ready for either.' I want to be ready, patiently waiting for whatever may be appointed for me."

Thus of the loose threads Effie gathered she was weaving a character for future usefulness which her cousin Winnie could not appreciate, neither could her aunt as yet comprehend it, so far beyond either of them had she realized the meaning of her favorite text, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least, . . . ye have done it unto Me."

The thread of our story was broken off when the conclusion to move was reached. We need not to resume it in order to follow through the intervening days of packing and preparing for the change. We find the whole family now at the mining-station. Morning has dawned after a comparatively good night's rest. They have seen the train pass onward, and they start on foot for the house pointed out as their future home.

All things had been made ready for their coming. The furniture had been ordered and was all delivered, and if there was anything yet needed the same source of supply was still open to them. Not quite all things either, for there were no provisions. The little public-house over whose door was the rather uninviting sign-board, "Hawley's Tavern," had to supply this need.

"Pork and corn-bread," whispered Mr. Dalton to his wife as they entered the dining-room; but while these were to be found, there was quite sufficient of other eatables to satisfy their appetites without being compelled to breakfast as Mr. Dalton and Willie did the first day they spent at the camp. There was also another striking difference between the two occasions: this morning no Walter Jones was present to invoke a blessing in his simple, heartfelt words. Yet from some hearts a silent thanksgiving was offered for the mercies by the way, and an added craving for the sheltering hand of Omnipotent Goodness to be over them still.

Not many days elapsed before some of the comforts of home began to be realized. The little knick-knacks that Mr. Hamilton suggested

they should take with them remained still unopened, and not until the substantial requisites of their housekeeping had all been duly attended to did they indulge in the ornamental part. Thus days were spent, and when the evening hour came it found them quite prepared for rest. "I cannot do half as much good work here as I could at home, it is so hot; and there is no cool place like our parlor to rest in. I wish we were all fixed."

"So do I," replied Mrs. Dalton as she and Winnie paused for a few moments while arranging some drapery in the room selected as the parlor; "but I think we are getting along very nicely, and by the time father and Willie return to-morrow I should not wonder if they find a comfortable little house awaiting their inspection. Have you seen Effie since dinner?"

"No, mother, I have not; I think she must have gone out this afternoon; her hat is not in the hallway, and I suspect she is hunting up some ragged children in readiness for Sunday. But here she comes across the railroad. I hope she does not intend to have a mission-school here in the house, for I see no other place for one."

"I should have no objection, if no other place can be found. Do you know if there is a church anywhere in the neighborhood?" "No, I do not, but Effie no doubt has found out all about it."

"Oh, auntie, what do you think! There is a little Sunday-school held over on the other side of the railroad in an old house that is used in the winter as a schoolhouse. I found the woman who is keeping it up. Just think, she is old and lame and quite hard of hearing; but she says she has twenty or thirty boys and girls sometimes there on Sunday! And when I told her I was one of the family that had just moved into the new house, she fairly cried, and said she hoped the Lord had sent us here to help her; she knew he would do it some time. I promised to come over on Sunday and sing and anything else I could do to help. She is a real good woman, I am sure, but I do not think she has ever had very much education."

As soon as Effie gave her aunt the opportunity, she replied, "We were talking about you just as you came in. We concluded you were out searching for something to do next Sunday, and I am glad for your sake that you have found it. I hope there may be something for each of us."

"Very likely there will be," was Winnie's rejoinder. "Both of you will have your out-door-mission work. Mine will be home mission, in taking care of the household matters; they

will require some looking after, and this is what I will do. Did you not once tell me about a woman who was so completely wrapped up in attending benevolent societies and church meetings of various kinds that she neglected her home duties to such an extent that everything about her house went wrong! We can arrange matters better than that in our establishment. You take the foreign mission and I will see after the home department. How will that suit you, cousin?"

"Not at all. I do not propose, first of all, to lose my interest in the home work. I expect to find time to do my regular share, and then have leisure enough for all I have in prospect at present. And in the next place I have no idea of your confining yourself to the kitchen or the pantry or to the exclusive use of the dust-brush or the broom. I know the latter is considered good exercise for indolent people, but I have not yet consigned you to that class; I shall take my share of wearing out the brooms. Auntie can do as she chooses. I think she can afford now however to relinquish the bulk of housekeeping affairs to us, and as we have Cora to help us, you will not be likely to get rid of my meddlesome fingers about the house as easily as you have planned for."

"Hush, Effie, you know what I mean. I be-

lieve in each one doing the things she is best qualified for, and you know I have no turn for such work as you delight in. I am willing to leave it all to you, and will do your work about the house to compensate for it. Is not this fair, mamma?"

"I hardly think it will be, but wait and see. There does not yet appear to be any necessity for a division of labor. I am glad there is a prospect for next Sunday bringing something to one of us, if only one. Did you find out whether there are any church services held here?"

"Yes, auntie, I did. The nearest church is about six miles away, and preaching only twice a month. An old minister—I think his name is Holloway—preaches there, and at a place still farther away the rest of the time."

"We must talk to papa about it when he comes home; perhaps there will be some way to have preaching where we can get to listen to it."

"Papa will not care whether there is any church or not."

"Do not say so, Winnie dear. Even if your father does not always go to church when he has the opportunity, I think he will do all he can to provide us with the means of doing it, even if it necessitates having a church of our own."

"Suppose we have a church, who will preach in it?"

"I cannot tell you, but if a place is provided, and there are people to listen, I think some means will be provided for the preaching. We will have to wait a while for this."

"Oh my, what a place! We must wait for everything. I almost wish we had remained in Westford; yet I suppose we have hardly been here long enough to know much about what we can do. I will try to be patient, mamma; I will keep in good humor. Oh there come papa and Willie;" and with a bound this good-hearted girl ran to greet them.

"How are you, Winnie, and how are you progressing with your housekeeping affairs? Is everything in order, or have you left some of the hard work for us to do?" Mr. Dalton asked.

"I think we have everything fixed up about as well as we can at present. It is beginning to seem a little homelike; but I miss so many things we were accustomed to, and then you know the furniture is all new; we have not become acquainted with it. But come in; we were just talking about church and Sunday-school. Effie says there is a church about six miles from here where an old preacher holds service twice each month. I do not believe it can be very much after all, but will you take us to see?"

By this time Mr. Dalton had reached the house, and greeted each member of his family in turn. "I knew you would not look for us until to-morrow, but I expected some things this evening by the train and thought I had better come and see about them; and it will be much more pleasant to spend the evening at home than in our shanty in the woods."

"We are very glad to have you at home, though we are so busy during the day we scarcely have time to get lonely, and when evening comes we have so much to talk about that bed-time overtakes us almost before we are ready for it. No one has come in to disturb us, not even to inquire after our health. Curiosity has not yet made us any friends. I expected some of the folks living in the house across the road would have come to see what we looked like inside, but they have only indulged themselves in pretty constant watching us from the outside."

Saturday brought considerable "cleaning up," and it was with a feeling of comfort they sat on the porch in the evening and reviewed the events of the past ten days.

Sunday was all that Effie could wish for, even if she did miss listening to her pastor in the brick church in Westford. She had work of her own to-day, and she looked forward with a

little fear; but there was a good commingling of hope, at least enough to overbalance her fear.

"Soon after dinner" she learned was the time. Slightly indefinite, 't is true; but she was prompt, and found others had about the same time that she had, and some twenty boys and girls of various ages and complexions were gathered around the door of the schoolhouse. A few seemed to preserve a moderate degree of quiet becoming the day and the occasion, while the majority were ventilating their animal spirits in true childhood fashion. Her presence had a wonderfully calming influence, for she had no sooner crossed the railroad than the open space in front of the house was cleared. Not a form to be seen, not a voice to be heard; all had disappeared.

"Come in. I was waiting for you and we will begin school." This was the greeting Effice received as she stood at the door. The conductor of the school, we hardly know what else to call her, was seated on one end of a bench already filled to the other end with some of the boisterous ones Effice had seen but a few moments before, now as quiet as mice.

"We always begin school by singing a hymn. We only know a few, so we have to make them go a great way and sing them over and over

again." Without further ceremony she commenced,

"There is a happy land Far, far away."

She was joined in it by nearly all who were in the room. When finished she added, "We now say the Lord's Prayer," and they all dropped to their knees as soon as the words escaped her lips.

As Effie had come to help, she asked, "Now, auntie, what shall I do? I promised to help you if I could. Shall I sing a hymn?"

"Yes, or anything else you choose," and Effie soon found her sweet voice could sing the praises of her Lord here amid the wildwoods quite as well as in the neatly furnished room in their church at Westford. Song after song, with a short talk here and there between, filled up the whole hour almost before she realized that time had wings here as well as elsewhere, and had not waited for her.

"I am glad you have come here to live. You will come to our Sunday-school always and we will get on so much better. I am old and do not know much; I do the best I can; but I love the good Lord, and try to get these girls and boys to love him too. Just sing once more and then we will go home."

"What shall I sing? I would like it to be

something you all know; then you can join me and it will seem more like Sunday-school. Where I live we all sing together when we close school, and it sounds so nice." Effic thought she could keep up with them if she got fairly started, though she was somewhat fearful lest they should outstrip her, and when one of the girls said, "Let us sing,

'Jesus loves me, this I know,"

she led them off and was much pleased when it was finished to find they could keep together so well.

"Do you like to sing?" she asked, "and would you like to come to my home and learn some new hymns and listen to me play on an organ while I try to teach you?"

"Indeed, we would. Will you do it?" was quite a general response to her invitation.

"To be sure I will. Now let me see how many of you can come to our house some afternoon this week, let us say on Wednesday, if that will suit." Nearly every hand was raised in response; even some who did not know exactly what it was about obeyed the impulse to do as the others did.

"And you must come, auntie. It will seem nicer for you to be with them, as I do not know any of them, not even a single name. I do not know your name; mine is Effie Lane."

"You could find out my name easy enough. Just ask who lives in the old-log house on the edge of the woods and you would soon hear, 'That is old Betsy Hall.' This is my name now, but it wont be much longer. I shall have a new name after a while; the good Lord has promised it. He never says anything unless He intends to do it. Yes, Betsy Hall will have a new name. Glory! glory! He'll give it to me himself." And the old face seemed to be lighted up with a smile from the better world.

CHAPTER VI.

EFFIE LANE'S MISSION WORK.

Duty is the upholding law through which the weakest become strong, without which all strength is unstable as water.

MRS. JAMESON.

"Well, Effie, how about Sunday-school? You do not look as if you had a very doleful time of it. Were there many there, and what kind of folks were they? Do tell us about it."

It was Miss Winnie who thus inquired of her cousin as soon as she returned from that first Sunday experience. The questions were not difficult to answer, either as to numbers or the kind of people whom she had met with.

"To commence," replied Effie, "there were about twenty-five, I should suppose, for I did not count them, of different ages and sizes. Some of them looked as if they might have been lying out in the sunshine all their lives, and had become considerably darkened on the outside, but I think they all have souls within that can be made as white as any of ours can; and after all, that is the important part. The old lady who calls the school hers is a somewhat strange character. She is just as full of genuine faith

as a body can be, though she can do but little in the way of teaching as we have been accustomed to. Perhaps she knows enough of the Bible to teach all that these children are capable of understanding just now. I think there are some of the strangest kind of people living around here I ever knew. Talk about missionaries—this woman is a missionary if there ever was one, though I do not believe she would know what I meant were I to tell her so."

"I guess then you have fallen in with the right person to begin with. You can have your mission-school at once already gathered for you, provided your present missionary does not object."

"I have no fear on that ground. I shall not interfere with her, only try to add to the work she has already commenced. In fact I have started the work in a new line. I have invited all to come here on Wednesday afternoon, and I have promised to teach them some new hymns—they only know a few of the old ones, though they are all good no doubt—and to play on the organ for them, and I want you to help me sing, will you?"

"Oh dear, I help you! Why, Effie, you know I could not, for I suppose some of those dirty children from across the road will be among them; I saw them coming from the direction

of the schoolhouse just before you came home. I would not want any of them to come near me. I could not bear it. If they would only stay outside the house, you might sing for them at the window."

"Winnie dear, I never could do that; it is out of the question. I know I ought to have consulted auntie first, but I did not think much about it. If she objects, we can meet over at the schoolhouse, for it will not be occupied during the week for a month or two. I thought the organ would be a great attraction, and I hope we can try it this week at least."

"I will put nothing in your way, only do not ask me to take any part in it. Do not change your plan on my account."

"Very well, if auntie does not object it will be all right." Thus the matter was dropped between Effie and Winnie, but not so between Mrs. Dalton and her niece. As soon as the former was told of what had been done she entered into it with almost as much zeal and delight as Effie evinced.

"How shall we do? Must we provide seats for them or let them stand around the organ? You have no hymn-books for them to sing from. Do you suppose many of them can read?"

"Some certainly must be able to read, as they have had school part of the year; but you know we used to teach the little folks at home without books, and I think we can do quite as well here as there; there are some smart children among them, I have already discovered."

"You will be better able to tell what you can do after one trial, at least. Shall I be permitted to be among your visitors?"

"To be sure, auntie; will you come? That will be so good of you. I wanted Winnie to help me, but she is afraid. I am so glad you will come."

At supper-time, when they were all gathered around the table, Mr. Dalton rather quizzically addressed Effie. "Say, chit, I hear you have found a Sunday-school already full grown. Do you want any books or papers? I shall be sending to Westford for some things this week and can order anything you need, unless you are already supplied; only let me know by to-morrow."

"Uncle dear, are you in earnest? Out here in the woods there cannot be much in the way of what are called Sunday-school supplies, but if you mean just what you say I will give you a list, and it will not be a very short one."

"I am not very much frightened in advance. Make it just as large as you need. I know you will not be unreasonable."

Bibles, hymn-books, picture cards, and some wall-texts and illuminated cards were all

required, and some other minor things that would come of use after a while.

There was no need for any one to knock at the door on Wednesday afternoon, for Effie Lane was there soon after dinner on the watch, and ready to welcome the first comer. She was a slender little girl apparently seven or eight years old, with dark hair and eyes, cleanly but meagrely dressed, barefoot, and with a sunbonnet on her head that showed but little of its original color, so frequently had it been washed; timid, yet not too much so to say "Annie Gray" when asked her name.

"Can you sing, Annie?" asked Mrs. Dalton.

"Yes, ma'am, a little; when she sings I can," pointing towards Effie, who just then was asking the names of two other girls entering the room.

"When I help you! Did you sing on Sunday at the schoolhouse?"

"Yes, ma'am, I sing some of the hymns. I hear pop sing them when he comes home from church, and that is the way I learn them."

"Where is the church your father goes to? I did not know there was one anywhere near here. Is it the one six miles off that I have heard something about?"

"I don't know; he is gone all day. We never go with him; I guess it must be a good way from here."

By this time others had arrived, and Mrs. Dalton suggested they should sing something they would all be likely to know. The "standby" upon all occasions was proposed, and the well-known hymn "There is a happy land" was joined in by all in the room.

We need not listen to those that followed, for two hours seemed none too long for their happy voices, uncultivated as they were, to go over and over a few of the sweet songs sung throughout the length and breadth of the land. Many a time Effie sang alone, and it was difficult to tell which her auditors enjoyed the more, listening in silence or joining in the song.

"Now we must wait a while before we attempt to learn any more. Will you come again next Wednesday? Suppose you do, and you may bring any one else with you who would like to come."

Mrs. Dalton had gone out of the room while they were singing the closing hymn, and just as the little company was about to disperse she appeared at the open door with a tray well filled with light, puffy dough-nuts sprinkled over with powdered sugar. From one to another it was passed till the tray was emptied. Ample provision had been made to meet the second and even third handing round, and her pleasure was quite as great in seeing her company enjoy that

which she had provided for them as was theirs in partaking of her kindness. The blessed Jesus fed soul and body at the same time, and why should not we?

- "O Winnie, how much you missed by not being down here! I have no doubt you heard us singing, but you ought to have been in the room and seen how the children enjoyed it. I am sure it will not require very many lessons, and they will do their teacher a great deal of credit after a while."
- "I have no doubt, from the empty dish on the table, that they fully enjoyed mamma's part of the programme, and I hope you enjoyed your part, dirt and all."
- "O Winnie, Winnie, do not talk so. Your cousin and I both enjoyed ourselves, and I am sure the children did also. You must not be so unkind. If you do not wish to be found helping others, do not disparage the work of those who take pleasure in it."
- "I did not mean to be unkind, mamma, only Effie continually brings up something she knows I care nothing for. But I suppose it is all right. What else was it you were about to say?"
- "Only that Annie Gray is a dear little girl. I know I shall love her; indeed I do already. She says her mother lives nearly a mile away from here, and she came in by herself. Her

father works out at the mines, and is gone all the week and only comes home on Saturday. I am going out to see them some time."

"Don't you do it, Effie. I know there must be snakes or bears or some such wild animals in the woods; you will get killed. I wonder these children are not all killed, they run about so recklessly. Mother, do not let Effie go by herself."

"Then I think you had better go with her to take care of her. I cannot go; father and Willie are away all day. Either you or Cora will have to be her protector if she needs one."

"That will do, mamma; let me go with Effie. I am not a bit afraid, and I should like it ever so much. The children do not get hurt or killed, and I see no reason why we should."

"Yes, Cora, you and I will go if auntie is willing, and perhaps some day Winnie will go along just to see how safe it is." This was decided upon for the following day, provided it did not rain.

Thursday was almost cloudless, beautiful but warm. The insect world that afternoon seemed as if they had retired from active life and were taking a long noon-day rest, everything was so quiet; even the breeze was subdued to a very gentle motion that scarce caused the most slender wings to vibrate. One exception alone there

seemed to be: the ever-present mosquito had not forgotten that all times were its own, but was on the alert for fresh victims.

Annie had given plain directions how to find her home, and there was no difficulty in following them. Right out in the open sunlight, not a tree or shrub to shade or relieve from the steady downpour of heat from early dawn to dewy eve, while on all sides not more than a hundred yards were tall pines and oaks towering towards the sky. Perhaps for health's sake this may have been, but certainly for neither comfort nor beauty. A little garden-patch of potatoes, beans, corn, and some other vegetables was on one side of the house, and differing from most of such spots, it was remarkably free from weeds.

Effie and Cora observed this, and the former remarked, "I do not believe the Grays can be lazy people like so many we see around us. Mr. Gray must be a hard-working man, or else his wife must have her hands full in keeping their place in such good order."

"Good afternoon, Annie; you see I have kept my promise. Is your mother at home?"

"Yes, ma'am, and pop is home to-day; he got hurt at the mine yesterday and could not work, so he came home. He is in the house now," and running in she called out, "Mom, here is the lady who sang for us yesterday." This announcement brought to the door of the little house a middle-aged woman, not of an altogether unprepossessing appearance, though she was caught in her every-day clothes, as she said.

"Come in, will you? My man is here; he got hurt and they sent him home in the wagon. He is not very bad, I guess. He got his foot mashed; a big rock fell on it."

"Thank you. I promised Annie I would come some time, but I am sorry your husband is hurt; I hope he will soon get over it. I had your little girl at our house yesterday and was very glad to find out who she was and where you lived. I had no trouble in finding you."

"It was real good of you to come," said Mr. Gray; "Annie told us about you last Sunday. I am glad I was at home when you came, only I would as soon have lost a day without being hurt. We poor fellows don't get to hear much singing except what we can do ourselves. Annie says you sang for them yesterday; I wish I could get to hear you some time."

"Why do you not go to Sunday-school too? Come next time and I will sing for you. Annie says you go to church, and when you come home you sing some of the hymns they sing there. I wish I could get to church; it is too bad there is none near here."

"That's so. Six miles seems a long walk on

a hot day, but most of it is through the woods. I go whenever I can. So does Walt Jones. I guess you have heard of him; his wife cooks for Mr. Dalton when he is at the mines. He is great on singing."

"I have heard my uncle speak of him and his wife. I have not seen either of them, as we have not been out to the mines yet. Do you not think there are enough people living around here for us to have a little church of our own? Then every one could have the opportunity of going without having such a long walk."

"I do think so, miss, and I wish Mr. Dalton would have one. He could do it if he wanted to. They say he has plenty of money and could hire a preacher two or three times a month."

"My uncle handles considerable money, I know, but it is not all his own, and he could not use other people's funds even for a church, unless the owners of it said so. I will talk to him about it some time soon."

Mrs. Gray was not altogether a silent listener while this conversation was progressing. She would occasionally put in a word or two, and when Effie alluded to all of them coming to Sunday-school she said, "If my man is well enough by next Sunday we will all come; but wont you sing for us now?"

"To be sure I will. What shall it be?"

"Just sing any of those hymns you sang for them yesterday; Annie could not remember all of them."

"Which one shall it be, Annie?" Annie could hardly recall any one in particular, so her father said, "No matter which; any one you choose."

Effie thought for a moment, then in her rich clear voice she sang,

"One there is above all others
Well deserves the name of Friend;
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end."

To her surprise Mr. Gray joined her. Perhaps there was not such a harmony of sounds as she would have looked for at her own home, but there was a sympathy of soul that is frequently wanting in many a larger or more cultivated company. At times her voice seemed almost lost in the greater volume of sound that came from the others, for at times Mrs. Gray and Annie also added their help.

"Sing another, please. We do not often hear any one but ourselves; we do love singing so much."

Hymn after hymn was sung. Many of them were of course entirely new to her audience, and some of them she had to repeat at Mr. Gray's request.

"It is so good of you to come to see us poor folks. I have worked for Mears off and on for ten years or more, and no one of his people were ever inside of this house. Wont you come often? it does us good. I believe I have almost forgotten my foot while you were singing. Sing once more before you go, please." And Effie and Cora sang together,

"Rock of ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee;"

and the tears came into the eyes of Mr. Gray as he shouted, "Glory hallelujah!" at the close of each stanza.

"Bless the Lord for sending you here! We are poor people, but the good Lord has taken care of us, and we thank Him for it. Good-by; come often. And you must come too, miss," addressing Cora; "we like people that can sing good hymns."

Effie and Cora started homeward, not without leaving a number of pretty motto cards and a few illustrated papers, and the blessings of those whom they had visited went with them.

As they wended their way through the deep woods, listening to the voices of myriad insects that had now come forth to enjoy the cooler air of late afternoon, Effie's soul seemed as if it had been lifted upward to a higher plane than she had been accustomed to walk on. She realized

there was a work before her, and that here was just the place to commence it. How gradually yet surely the Lord had opened the way, and shown her the peculiar talent needed for the cultivation of the field, and how quickly she realized that she was the possessor of it.

"Just to think, Cora, all this comes from my strolling across the railroad one day last week to discover who lived in that queer little hut on the edge of the woods. You remember seeing it from the railroad station. It looked so lonely I quite wanted to know who could live in it. How often some little incident shows us unexpectedly the very thing we are looking for, and that with all our striving we have failed to discover! Do you remember when we were talking about this neighborhood while uncle was away, it seemed like idle words to form any plans as to what we would do if we were to move here; but we have actually found the very kind of work we thought of. Yet what a different kind of people we have met with from what we expected: Mr. Jones, Mr. Gray, and old Betsy Hall; not very cultivated, but certainly real good, honest-hearted people. I wonder whether there are any more like them.

"Cora, suppose you and I start the same kind of a school I had at home. I think it would be nice to teach these children to sew as well as to read. Judging from all I have seen, I do not believe one of them could cut out the very simplest kind of a dress; and as for making it up, they could not do the first thing at it. What do you say, shall we do it?"

"I do not care. I will help you all I can; but where would you have your school? We could not do it at home, and mamma might not want us to go out while the weather is so hot. I think she was a little undecided about allowing us to go to-day, but I am glad I came."

"Let us try it if auntie does not put a damper on it by any of her fears about fevers or other diseases. I do not think she will object particularly on my account, but she may be afraid for you. However, if I go ahead you can help when the weather is cooler."

By this time they had reached the edge of the wood, and could see their house as they emerged into the sunshine. There was a gentle breeze fanning them, a few filmy clouds cast light shadows over the landscape. There was nothing to be called especially beautiful, yet everything was so wild and uncultivated that nature seemed in harmony with the humanity she sheltered. Tall pines, just as they grew, and little trees shooting up among them following the same pattern, unchanged perhaps from "the beginning," were fit emblems of the race

of men who, from one generation to another, lived and died and their places were filled by others—the father a prototype of the son, the son "a chip of the old block."

To Effie Lane's mind there was hope in this. Perhaps a certain degree of indolence would be encountered and would require to be overcome, but success at Westford emboldened her to try the same experiment here. Thus she was gathering up the loose threads of her plans and straightening them out.

"I have it, Cora. I will ask Auntie Hall about it, and see what she thinks. She knows the children so much better than we do, and perhaps, until it will be needed, we can have the old schoolhouse. I will see her to-morrow if I can, and then we can get to work at once if she thinks it will do. She must be brought over to our way of thinking and doing, and I anticipate little trouble in this. Let us ask Aunt Ruth about it."

"Well, girls, did you find your walk a very hot one? It has been delightful here, with this fine breeze blowing through the hall. I have felt the heat much less than yesterday. You have been gone nearly three hours. Did you have a pleasant visit?"

"Indeed we did, auntie. We found Mr. Gray at home. He got hurt at the mines and

had to be brought home. I think he is a good-hearted man. I like him as much as I do Betsy Hall, only he is a different kind of a person. There are two men at least here who try to do what is right. I wonder how many more we shall find.

"We want to tell you something that Cora and I thought of doing, provided you interpose no objection. It is to open the same kind of school I had at home for little girls, and teach them to sew as well as to read, or to do anything else that seems practicable. The principal difficulty that presented itself was, where our school should meet. I thought of the old schoolhouse, if we could obtain possession of it. What do you think of our plan?"

"You say you and Cora planned this?"

"That is exactly so. We talked it over as we came home through the woods. I did not suppose you would have any objection to my doing it or to Cora joining me when the weather permitted. I think it is quite hot during the greater part of the day, but it is generally so delightful towards evening, I do not believe we would suffer from the heat."

"I have no objection at all, and am glad that Cora will be your helper. If there are only to be little girls, why cannot they come here just as they did yesterday? They can sit on the porch or in the hall while they are sewing, and as they are accustomed to being out all hours of the day, it will make less exposure for both of you."

"Would you be willing, auntie? That will be so nice! I did not think you would like to do this. We can commence next week and I can tell them on Sunday. I am sure they will be delighted to come, and then we can have some singing before they go home."

Thus the matter was settled so far as the place was concerned. Effie did not forget she was to consult Mrs. Hall about it, and that was attended to early the following morning. No opposition was encountered in that quarter, but hearty encouragement.

"Bless you, dear, I would do it myself if I could, but I am too old and cannot see well enough to sew for myself very much. You are a blessing to us poor folks: the good Lord will reward you some day for all."

A day busy was spent in searching among their household goods for material upon which to commence, and by Saturday afternoon Effie and Cora felt as if they would be ready to meet their sewing-class as soon as it could be gathered together.

CHAPTER VII.

WORK AT THE MINES.

HUGH DALTON was a man of considerable penetration. It did not take him long to determine which of the men in Mr. Mears' employ were faithfully earning the wages he agreed to pay them and which were shirking their duties whenever opportunity offered. He soon discovered further that not one among them was a practical miner, though some could readily learn if under a competent head. Many of them were useful as laborers, but if the operation was to be a paying one, skilled workmen must be brought from elsewhere.

All this had been duly communicated to Mr. Hamilton, with the result that ten practical miners had been sent to take charge of the work. They were mostly married men, but their families were left behind until they should decide as to the desirability of making this their place of residence. It was however not the design of Mr. Dalton to discharge any of the men now at work if they continued industrious and steady.

Soon Mr. Dalton discovered that the new men could not perform the same amount of labor in

the course of ten hours as they had been accustomed to in the place they came from, and it would be exacting too much from them to demand it.

"See here, boys; come to the office this evening after work and let us have a little talk over matters. You are here now and there is no need of your returning home; it does not keep so hot all the year. I think we can arrange things to suit us all, even if we cannot make the weather just to suit us."

Hugh Dalton believed that whatever was to the interest of the men under his care would also be to the interest of his employers, who were depending upon his watchfulness for the profit they expected to derive from their investment. Hence he looked upon both sides of this perplexing question, and he inspired such confidence in the minds of his workmen as could have been gained under no other circumstances.

"All right, sir; Mr. Hamilton said you would do the right thing by us, or we would never have come. We will be on hand." And they were all there.

We will not wait to listen to all their talk. It is enough to know it was entirely satisfactory, and three hearty cheers for Mr. Dalton evidenced the feeling with which they moved away as that gentleman closed and locked his office door.

Sunday was a quiet day around the mines. No work and no church left the men to dispose of their time as each one felt inclined to do.

"What do you say, men? Parson Holloway preaches over at the meeting-house to-day. I am going and will show you the way; let us all go. What do you say?"

This was Walter Jones. The men were sauntering idly around, seemingly waiting for some one to tell them how to put the time in, and the proposition arrested their attention.

"How far do you call it to the meetinghouse?" asked one of them.

"Just a good walk. I never measured it, but have often tramped it over there. It is through the woods most of the way. He is a powerful good preacher. If you go and do not like him, then you need not try it again."

"Come, Sandy, let us all go. I will. There's no use of any of us staying round here doing nothing all day."

"All right, Jim, go ahead. How soon do you start?"

"Right off. I am ready," responded Walter Jones. "Fall in;" and ten men with Jones and two or three others as leaders fell into a broken line of march for the little log meeting-house.

Parson Holloway was there. He noticed the

company that Walter Jones brought, and supposed it was the new men he had heard had lately come to "Dalton's" to work. He took in the situation at once. His audience seemed to inspire him with greater vigor than usual, and his singing and preaching were full of fervor. There was a vein of sober earnestness in this unlettered man that some more cultivated preachers lack, and he possessed the faculty of impressing his congregation with it.

The text that morning was a very old one, he said, and was from the first words that were ever written: "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." "I tell you, brethren, God does not say that about everything that man makes. Who makes whiskey? Who makes the fools that go round drinking and stealing and fighting and cursing? God made you and meant that what he made should be good, just like it was in the beginning. But Satan makes men's hearts bad and he never made anything good, but spoils all he comes across that once was good. It is Satan that makes you lie and drink and gamble; I want you to know it; and when he gets hold of you it is hard to shake him off; he will not let you go if he can help it. But if the Lord gets hold of you he can keep you from Satan's power. That is certain. Just as Moses said it was all good, so God will make you all good if you will just let him do it. Suppose you try. Stop drinking. Stop swearing. Stop going fishing on Sunday. And ask the Lord to keep you from doing wrong, and see if he will not do it. God does nothing wrong. All he does is good, yes, very good."

Such was a portion of Parson Holloway's discourse. We cannot put on paper his style of speaking or singing. Though the words of the latter were some of the most familiar of the old hymns known to our childhood, they were lined out and emphasized in a peculiar manner. But they found an echo in the hearts and voices of his hearers, and they sang with an energy such as we already know Walter Jones and Hiram Gray were equal to.

At the conclusion of the service the preacher came down from the platform, and walking towards the group of men standing by Walter Jones, said,

"You are the men just come to Dalton's, I suppose. Glad to see you. Will you come every time we have preaching here? Suppose I come over to your place some time, now there are so many of you. What do you say? Would you have a meeting there?"

"Yes, we will, parson: come along. I will get things fixed up for you."

"Let me see, next Sunday I preach at Han-

key's; Sunday after I will come. You see to it: out in the woods, under those big pine-trees. Get me a box to stand upon; that will be all I shall want. We will have a grand-time."

"See here, Jones, does that parson preach and sing like that all the time? If he does he must be a mighty sight better than some of the men up our way. I do not believe half of them know what they are talking about. I do not care very much about preaching, but if he comes I will go to hear him."

This was the comment of one of the new men as they walked homewards. As we shall meet with him again we may as well know who he is, Jake Walters by name. Not a bad man by any means, in the common acceptation of the term: he did not drink, very seldom did he take his Maker's name profanely upon his lips, and he tried to be honest in his dealings with his fellow-men; but as he said, he "cared very little for preaching," so we may conclude his heart had not yet been enlightened by the light of the gospel. He told what his past life had been in these few words, and intimated that in one point at least there would be a present change in saying, "I will go to hear him."

No particular events occurred to mark this week above its predecessors. Work progressed as usual. Some new machinery arrived and

was being put in place. Carpenters were busy putting up some new houses, as we may remember Mr. Dalton had planned for. They were in blocks of two, and as soon as finished were to be occupied by the families of the new men who would remove hither. The sound of the saw and hammer was heard from morning until night, and a scene of activity was daily witnessed.

"Mr. Dalton, we think when you get the new houses all finished there will be quite a little town here, and we ought to have a name. You know the people over the mountain call it 'Dalton's.' Shall you adopt that as the name of the place?"

"No, sir, not at all. You are right about having a name, but it must not be named after me. Let us think about it a while; it will be time enough when the houses are finished."

Not only among the men had this subject been agitated. At the Dalton homestead it had been talked over, and Effie, ever ready to start a new enterprise, took this matter in charge.

"Just wait a while; there is something else quite as important as a new name. Can we not also have a little chapel built for the men? Then the place will deserve a name. Will you not put up a little meeting-house? that is what they call it around here."

"I have not given much thought to that sub-

ject as yet; perhaps it might be a good idea. No doubt there will be in time quite a little settlement around the mines. I do not know what Mr. Hamilton would say to it; he might think I was spending the company's money unnecessarily. You know he is not much of a man for these things."

"But only think, uncle, so many men, and no place for them on Sunday! They lounge about or go hunting or fishing, and you know they ought not to do this on Sunday. Do build a little house, even if it is not a very handsome one."

"I will write to Mr. Hamilton about it, and do exactly as he orders."

"That will be very kind in you, and then you can give the place a new name, for it ought to have one if there is a meeting-house built."

"Sure enough, the men have been talking about this already. Now if we have the church it will be your doings, and you shall give the place a name if Mr. Hamilton does not claim the right. Will that suit you, puss?" chucking her under the chin as he spoke.

"Indeed it will suit me exactly, for I have been thinking of a name, and when the chapel is built I will tell you what it is. If you will allow me I will go out the first time services are held, and propose the name and see whether the people will like it; and then, if Mr. Hamilton is satisfied and you are, that will settle the matter. Will you write at once to Mr. Hamilton?"

"Yes, I will write very soon. We could not commence work on it for about two weeks yet, and we shall hear in good time."

The letter was duly written. Much of it referred to the various business aspects of the operations, but at the close of it there was this sentence:

"When the new houses and machine-shops are completed there will be some thirty buildings in addition to the old shanties, which are not of much value and will be of no further use; they might as well be torn down. The men think the place will be of sufficient importance to have a new name, and I fully agree with them. What shall it be? Something else too. My niece, Effie Lane, wants to have a little chapel built; she has taken a great interest in the children in her native place and has started a school for them, and she wishes to do something of the same kind for the children at the mines. She thinks a building might be put up that could be used for both purposes. What shall I do? There will probably be sufficient lumber on the ground to put up a fair-sized house that would not cost very much. I think it would give the

place a better standing in the neighborhood if there was some kind of a church on it. Please let me know how I shall act."

Two people's schemes were thus being furthered, though each of an entirely different character. One planned for the Master's sake, the other from a mercenary consideration, though both pointing to the same result, a place of worship.

One person drops a dime or even a cent into the Lord's basket with a prayer that it may be accepted, not so much for its value as a coin but because it was a heart's gift. Another drops a gold coin into the same basket to be seen of men and recognized as a liberal giver to the church funds. While Effie Lane was actuated by the purest motives in her desires for the welfare of the people around her, Hugh Dalton was looking more at the temporal advantages to be gained from the proposed building.

When Mr. Hamilton had read the letter and came to the part relating to the chapel, he gave a very significant "Humph! What next? I suppose they will want us to pay the preacher's salary. Well, it will not be very much, and it might after all cost less to keep a parson, if he could control the men and keep them at home, than to have quarrels and strikes all the time." So Mr. Hamilton when he replied to Mr. Dal-

ton's letter, after referring to each separate item of business, finished with these words:

"As to the chapel, it might be an economical as well as prudential matter, provided the first cost was not too much. If the men want to go to church it will be better for them to do it at home; but how about a parson? Do you intend to have one or only let your niece have her school at present? However, go ahead. Do as you choose, and when the house is finished you may as well get a preacher too, and whatever is short on his salary we will make up for the first year. As for name, tell your niece she may as well give the place a name; only one thing I insist upon, my name is not to be in any way associated with it."

Sunday came round, one of those fine, clear, warm days so common at that season of the year. A good-sized space had been cleared off at the edge of the woods on Saturday evening, and a rough platform had been erected for the preacher, who was prompt to his appointment and was on hand. Notices had been generally circulated through the neighborhood, and for miles in all directions the people had gathered. Mr. Dalton had brought his family to this first service at "the camp," and the last to be held there till the new name was known.

If the strangers were interested at the meet-

ing they attended two weeks since, they were aroused to-day. Mr. Gray was present, and of course Walter Jones was there, and their voices rang out through the wild forest till there seemed to be an echo from the tall trunks around and the canopy of branches overhead. Parson Holloway began the service, waving his long arms and moving to and fro across the platform, singing at the top of his voice hymn after hymn of the good old-fashioned kind that past generations had been accustomed to hear, and which orally had descended from father to son, with never a change of tune.

At last a slight lull came in the service, and a sweet voice was heard singing,

"Just as I am, without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidst me come to thee.
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!"

It was Effie Lane; her soul was all aflame with the thought, "Now is the accepted time. Seize the present moment and let it be one that will tell for time and eternity." Hence her voice spread over that company in the words of the hymn like the overshadowing of the divine Presence. No one joined her but the members of her own family. They were all sitting together on some seats especially prepared for them somewhat by themselves, and the solemn

sweetness of the voices no one dared to mar. Her face was radiant with joy as she sang the concluding stanza:

"Just as I am! thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!"

It was not so much the sermon that was preached as the songs that were sung that sent a thrill of pleasure and satisfaction through the minds of those who had already learned to love such gatherings, while to the indifferent ones it was a new experience altogether unanticipated, and which they scarcely knew how to understand. They had frequently been spectators at such meetings, but to-day they felt as though they were to some extent partakers of the good feeling that existed.

"See here, parson; if you will come here to live we will build you a meeting-house, and we can have meetings every Sunday and in all kinds of weather, without taking the risk of storms. I like being in the woods such a day as this, but this kind of weather does not last all the year."

It was one of the new men that thus started the idea of building a meeting-house, and it was taken up quite heartily by others.

"Yes, indeed, that will be just the thing we

want," broke in Walter Jones. "I'm glad to hear you say so. Who will help?"

A chorus of voices gave the reply, "All of us, right away."

There would have been little trouble to have had a subscription paper well filled on the spot; but while the enthusiasm was at its height Mr. Dalton was noticed to walk towards the preacher, and for a few moments an earnest conversation was held between them, the result of which was announced by Parson Holloway from the platform.

"Wait a moment, friends; I have something to tell you. You say you want to have a meeting-house, and you want me to come and live here and preach to you. I like to preach out in the open air. I feel freer, I can see all the grand things the good Lord has made, and it makes me feel how much we owe him. But if you want a house you shall have the house, whether I come to preach in it or not. Mr. Dalton says he will build it, and not ask you for a cent towards it. What do you think of that?"

At this Effie could not restrain herself, but clapped her hands for joy. The act was contagious, and Parson Holloway's voice was hushed amid the enthusiastic display of approval that followed. He continued, when he could again be heard:

"I knew you would like it, and Mr. Dalton says he will give you a hundred dollars a year towards the preacher's salary. What do you think of that? It will not be a mean kind of a house either; it is to be a chapel with a steeple on it."

Here Effie again interrupted, "And I will put a bell in it."

"No, miss, he says he will do everything. You did not give me a chance to finish what I was about to say. He says, 'A steeple on it and a bell in it, so you will all know when to come to meeting, when the bell rings.'"

We learn that it was not Mr. Dalton's intention to abandon the project of having a meeting-house, even if the result of his application to Mr. Hamilton was unsuccessful. He knew the advantages of it; and his determination as expressed by Mr. Holloway was not altogether the conclusion of the moment, although it was thus made known rather in advance of his intention.

Had Mr. Dalton waited to write that letter to the company in which the subject of the chapel was particularly alluded to, and had he written it this week, perhaps there would have been less stress laid upon the business aspect, but rather more prominence given to the spiritual needs of the people. To-day his word was given; on his personal responsibility the chapel was to be built.

When Mr. Hamilton's letter was received during the week following it did not change his purpose in the least. For a while he debated as to where the expense of building should be placed; but he concluded to let that rest until future developments showed what it was best to do.

How easily plans can be laid, and sometimes to be as easily destroyed! Mr. Dalton's proved to be no exception, but we will wait a while to hear how this happened.

We remember that when at Westford Mr. Dalton was not much of "a meeting man." He would frequently accompany the rest of the family to church, and none could give their pastor a more cordial welcome to their house than he. Yet he had never gone beyond the acknowledgment of religion, saying, "It is all a good thing. Some time I may give it more thought when I can do so intelligently. I do not believe in excitement." Such were his excuses for delay. How seldom do such persons find the time come for turning their thoughts from earthly things and seeking for that which belongs to the world beyond.

A new feeling now had entered his heart, if it had not taken actual possession of him. Three months since Hugh Dalton would not have pledged himself to perform any such act; he would not perhaps have recommended it to his employers. There was no plan of a chapel on those bulky papers that Mr. Dalton submitted to the company at the time the purchase was made. All other needed buildings were carefully provided for, but no chapel was spoken of.

Wherefore this change! Home influence may have had very much to do with it; and he could see that the quiet work that Effie was doing among the children was having its effect among the men. In fact Effie was already a leader among them. She had actually seen but little of them, but they had heard much of her. So that it was not by personal contact, but by a transmitted power, that her influence was felt, and her wish was all that was needed to carry out any plans she might form.

All this Mr. Dalton had noticed, and he could not but ask himself the reason of this. "Her look is sufficient to calm the most reckless of the men. Surely she possesses some hidden power to which I am a stranger," he concluded.

Seed may slumber a long time in the ground ere it shows signs of life. Sometimes it may grow in proportion to the care, or want of it, bestowed on the soil in which it is planted. The sunshine, the rains, and the gentle dews are all needed to bring forth the tender shoots. So the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was entering the heart of Hugh Dalton, and his act of today gave evidence of the bursting germ that would be seen after many days springing up to bear fruit. He only needed the stimulating power of the Holy Spirit, the sunshine of Jesus' love, and the gentle hand of Effie Lane to lead him to the open door.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEWING-SCHOOL.

"Do you think you can sew these two pieces of calico together, Annie, if I pin them for you this way? You must try and take little stitches and keep them straight. Let me see how well you can do it."

This was the first day of the sewing-school. Mrs. Dalton had provided some cheap calico and plenty of needles and cotton, so that no matter how many might come, there would be some work for every one who could handle a needle. The idea of not being able to handle a needle may seem strange, but if there were some who could pass it through the calico without wounding their fingers, there were others who could not pass the thread through the eye. Thus the beginning was made in sewing and in garment-making.

Annie Gray, who was asked the question as to her ability to sew with little stitches and make a strong seam, answered, "I am not sure, ma'am, but I can try."

"Then I am sure you will succeed; most people do if they try. You must hold the calico as I do. Now watch me and see how I do it.

Try again. There you have it. But stop a moment; try and hold your needle the way I hold mine. Do you see?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Very well, go on for a while. I must attend to Lilly. I notice she is waiting for me to show her what to do next. Lilly, you know already how to sew, but I want you to become a very neat seamstress; then you can make the dresses and other garments for your mother and sister. Here is a dress I have cut out that I think will about fit your little sister; if you will make it up nicely I will send it to her as a present."

"She don't want any new dress half as much as I do. She don't go to Sunday-school, and I do, and have to wear this old thing."

"Very well, if you make this one nicely I will let you try one for yourself; but I want first to see how well you can sew when you try. I like to have everything done neatly."

"It do n't make any difference how she looks; she will tear it out on the bushes the first time she gets it on. I know she will."

"Perhaps if it looks very nice and clean she will be careful of it. Let us try her; this is the only way to find out."

Thus from one to another Effie went until she had given each one of the sixteen girls

something to do. They were not all as willing to try as Annie Gray was, nor yet were they all as selfish or ill-natured as Lilly Hendricks. These two may be set down as the extremes, and between them might be found all varieties and shades of character and disposition. Some tried to please their teacher, while others pouted at the work given them to do.

"I thought she said she was going to give us a dress to make for ourselves. I would n't have come to sew such stuff as this if I had known it."

"Are you not ashamed of yourself, Kit Andrews! You know she did not say she was going to give us new dresses, only she would teach us how to make them. If she gives Lil Hendricks one maybe she will give some of the rest of us dresses too. I do not care; she is real nice, and I am going to try and please her whether she gives me anything or not."

Such were some of the comments passed upon this first day's work; and if Effie Lane could have heard them all she might have almost felt disposed to abandon at once the plan she had formed, so far at least as some of her pupils were concerned. But she was so intent upon the work in hand there was no time to listen to the conversation that was going on around her. She knew that girls would talk, and as

she had not imposed silence upon them there was no need of any censorship over their words unless too loudly spoken or too rough in language. Now and then passing by the whisperers or sitting beside some one whom she was endeavoring to instruct in some particular part of her work, she might overhear some of their suppressed whispers, but none sufficient to glean from them any idea of their full import.

An hour was thus spent in more or less constant instruction as to the way to hold the calico or how to get the needle through without fastening the thread to the thumb or finger, which it was some way or other very prone to do.

"Come, girls, we will take a little rest for a few moments. I will play on the organ and sing for you. I want you to learn a little hymn. I think it is a beautiful one, not very new, but none the less good. Come, stand in a circle around the organ, this way. You know what a circle is, round just like a wheel, only this time we will make just a half-circle. Annie, you may stand at that side; Lilly, you come next, and so on; there will be room for all of you without crowding. I want you to listen very attentively while I sing the first verse, to catch the words and the tune;" and the sweet voice of Effie Lane broke forth in response to her touch of the organ keys:

"'Let us gather up the sunbeams
Lying all around our path;
Let us keep the wheat and roses,
Casting out the thorns and chaff;
Let us find our sweetest comfort
In the blessings of to-day,
With a patient hand removing
All the briers from the way.
Then scatter seeds of kindness
For our reaping by-and-by.'

"Do you not think that is beautiful? It is exactly what we all ought to do. There is no good in gathering thorns and briers to make a bouquet of and forget that there are such beautiful flowers growing among them. Some of you may not have very many pleasant things every day, but I think there must be now and then some bright little thing that brings you joy. That is the one you ought to remember, and the disagreeable things will be almost forgotten. But listen and I will sing another verse:

"'Strange we never prize the music
Till the sweet-voiced bird has flown;
Strange that we should slight the violets
Till the lovely flowers are gone;
Strange that summer skies and sunshine
Never seem one-half so fair
As when winter's snowy pinions
Shake their white down in the air.'"

"Is that all, Miss Effie?" asked Annie Gray as this verse was concluded and Effie made a pause to look around upon her audience.

"No, dear, it is not; there are two more verses. Do you want to hear the whole of it?"

"Oh yes, do sing them all, they are so beautiful. I could stand here all day and listen to you sing. I wish pop was here; he does love singing. Wont you sing it next meeting-day?"

"I cannot say about that; perhaps I may;" and she finished the song:

""If we knew the baby fingers
Pressed against the window-pane
Would be cold and stiff to morrow—
Never trouble us again—
Would the bright eyes of our darling
Catch the frown upon our brow?
Would the print of rosy fingers
Vex us then as they do now?

""Ah, those little ice-cold fingers,
How they point our memories back
To the hasty words and actions
Strewn along our backward track!
How those little hands remind us,
As in snowy grace they lie,
Not to scatter thorns, but roses,
For our reaping by-and-by.
Then scatter seeds of kindness
For our reaping by-and-by.'

"Why do you think I love this little hymn so much? Let me tell you. Once I had a little sister who was sickly and scarcely ever felt well. She was rather cross and fretful, and would put me out of humor. I would be cross and behave very unkindly to her, when I ought to have

done everything I could to relieve her suffering and almost constant pain. My mother would spend hours trying to soothe her, and I complained because I thought she neglected me to care for this little afflicted one. I loved my little sister, I am sure; but I did very little to make her short life a happy one. I was selfish, and cared more for my own pleasure than I did for dear little Lilian's comfort. It seems now as if I was taking all the bright and beautiful things out of her life and filling up the hours and days with cruel thorns and briers. I did not know it then, for I was not any older than some of you are; but when they laid her out in her pretty white dress, and the little casket in which she was placed was covered over with beautiful white flowers, then I thought how few flowers I had scattered over her pathway. It seemed to me as if I had done nothing but unkind acts to her all her life. It was not quite so bad as that, but it really appeared so to me. I have not forgotten it, and that is one reason why I try to make other people happy now. I once heard it said, 'The greatest thing a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some one of His children.' I think if it is not the greatest thing it certainly is very near it, for Jesus said it was the same as doing it to Him."

"O Miss Effie, did you have a little sister to die? I am so sorry. I wish I could have seen her. Did she look like you? I know she must have been sweet."

"No, Annie, I do not think she looked very much like me. Some day I will show you her picture. I have one, but I cannot get it now; it is among some things I have not yet unpacked. She was only six years old when she died. It was a good many years ago, but I have tried to be kind to everybody since then, and I want you all to be kind to each other and to every one you meet. Now we have been resting for nearly half an hour, we must try a little more work. I hope we shall find that each one of us has learned something this afternoon."

Had Effie Lane gone around during the next hour and listened to the words, she might have heard from the same lips that she had plentifully scattered seeds of kindness and love in hearts that had seldom come under such influence.

"A'n't she nice! I'll never say another word against her. I do n't care whether she gives me a dress or not, I'm going to make this one just as nice as I can to please her," and Lilly Hendricks actually went back to her work a changed girl, for the time being at least. "Kind words never die."

Not on one listening ear alone had the words of that song fallen, nor yet the comments that Effie had made upon it. Scarcely a household was represented in that little company in which the sentiment would enter out of place. Kindness was not a natural trait of character; "Every one for himself or herself," was the prevalent rule. Yet there was some fallow ground in which good seed had that afternoon been dropped to spring up erelong and bear fruit a hundred-fold.

"Do sing again before we go home, wont you, Miss Effie? We do love so much to hear you." Work was now being put away and the sixteen girls were preparing to leave.

"What shall I sing, Lilly? I would like it to be something that you all know; then you could join me in it."

"When we get through Sunday-school we often sing, 'Happy Land;' we all know it."

"Very well then, I will sing that. It is very old, but none the worse on that account. After we get some new singing books we can learn some fresh hymns, and I know you will like that."

"Are we to have singing-books to keep for ourselves? When will they come?"

"I did not say anything about giving them to you to keep. I shall see about that after a

while. I expect some pretty cards and papers; I may give you some of them."

"Happy Land" and two or three other well-known hymns were sung, and a band of happy girls dispersed to their varied homes.

Are you looking for any of those scowls or listening for any of those unkind or scornful words we saw or heard about the time the work was being given out? Only about two hours ago, but your search will now be in vain. Sit down for a few moments and examine that little dress that was so soon to be torn on the briers or soiled in the mud. You will be surprised to note the difference there seems to be in the workmanship. The first hour showed crooked seams, large stitches, altogether careless work; but now see how neatly that skirt and body have been sewed together. Those short sleeves you would think Miss Effie must have helped at, but she did not even see them until they were sewed in. What or who helped Lilly this last hour? Was it just the spirit of love from Effie's life that had touched her heart that day?

These may not have been the particular thoughts that came to either of them at that hour, but they were the flowers and not the thorns that each one bore away with her when the song was ended, and sixteen happy girls

went to their homes leaving aunt and niece all the happier for the pleasure they realized had been given. Thus one seed was sown, the fruit of which they would gather in time.

"He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. 11:25.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW CHAPEL.

"MR. DALTON, will you let us men build the new meeting-house? We had a meeting last evening, and we agreed if you were willing we would each give a week's work towards it. We thought it was not altogether fair that we should not have a hand in it."

"But, Jones, the company have written me word that the house may be built, and that the expense will be borne by them. Yet if the men wish to have a hand in it I have no particular objection, and as next week will be a rather slack time while the new engine is being put in place, I will agree to it, and will pay you half wages."

"No, sir, we want to work on our own account; it will not be giving anything if we take pay for our work. You give us the lumber and nails, and we will do the work, only you will have to show us what to do."

All the men, both new and old, seemed ready to stand by what Walter Jones had proposed. This would be a real giving. It meant a sacrifice, one entire week's wages, to men who at the best of times were not able to earn much more

than sufficient to provide the actual necessities of life. This was not a matter to be lightly agreed to. True, the loss would be no greater than many men or even whole communities submit to when "on a strike." In one instance the loss is sustained in the vain hope that good may come from it, or it may be on account of some imaginary grievance and led on by the mandate of a single dissatisfied man. In the present instance the good was only prospective, but it had the assurance of a positive promise. It was like bringing their tithes into the storehouse and waiting for the outpouring of the expected blessing.

We must not conclude that either Walter Jones or Hiram Gray was a type of the men to be found at the mines. By no means. Yet this voluntary offering only shows how much influence one or two earnest men can have over others, who while they may differ from them in their estimate of the value of the thing proposed to be done, yet will yield a hearty acquiescence in the scheme because they know the leaders in it are honest and sincere. Some of the newcomers rejoiced at the prospect and entered into Jones' proposition with zeal; and the rest joined them, not wishing to be considered as opposing it, though they would have been quite willing to accept Mr. Dalton's proposition of half-pay.

They proved to be an industrious set of builders. There were about twenty of them who started on Monday morning in the work. It was not an elaborate plan that Mr. Dalton had prepared, but a simple house, thirty feet by twenty-four, with a steeple on one corner. The head carpenter directed all the work, and so energetic were they that Saturday evening found them with the roof on the house and the floor laid. No windows were yet in place, but the workmen insisted that they should have some kind of service in it.

"We will have a singing-meeting, Mr. Dalton; Jones and myself can do that much, and the rest will help, if you do not object."

"No, Gray, I do not object; but Parson Holloway will not be here, and you cannot have much of a meeting without him. However, do as you choose."

"All right, we will see about it on Sunday."

Mr. Dalton thought they might use the work of their own hands as they wished to, but he did not mention it to his family. Even if he had proposed that they should go out, Effie would have preferred to spend the day with her girls, as she had received the cards and papers she had promised to distribute to them. She would not wish to disappoint them of this pleasure.

It would be difficult to decide where the enthusiasm was the higher, at the chapel or at the schoolhouse. It was of a different character at each place: somewhat rough in manners at the chapel, where no restraint was placed on voice or gesture and each one seemed to give vent to his or her feelings as the moment prompted, while at the schoolhouse enthusiasm was tempered by the sweet voice and gentle manner of Effie; and while every eye sparkled with delight, the impression made was rather seen and felt than heard.

The meeting at the chapel was in the morning, but Hiram Gray came home at noon, walking the ten miles in the hot sunshine with his foot still suffering somewhat from the injury he had received; but he would not miss the singing that had been promised for the afternoon. He came in rather late for some of the exercises, but not too much so for the part he most enjoyed.

Miss Effie had just been distributing the hymn-books as he entered the open door, and she stepped up to him, saying, "I am glad to see you, Mr. Gray; we are just about to try some of our new hymns. Here is a book; perhaps you may be able to help us."

"Now, children, I will sing the first verse and I want you to follow me on your books, and then we will try it together. We will soon learn them if we all pay attention."

"O Miss Effie, wont you sing that song about roses and thorns? I want pop to hear it."

"Yes, Annie, after a while; but first I wish to sing some of the hymns in these books. I always try to please you, and you may at any time ask me when you want anything in particular, and if I can I will gladly gratify you."

Mr. Gray added considerably to the volume of sound. His was a voice naturally loud, and he only enjoyed singing when he could throw his shoulders back and expand his lungs to their utmost capacity. While a little toning down would have been quite grateful to Effie, she would not risk hurting his feelings by even suggesting a change, and whenever she asked them to follow her his voice was always prominent.

"I intend to give each one of you a handsome card to-day. I want you to learn the text there is upon it, and next Sunday be able to tell me what it is. The hymn-books you must leave here so that I will have them for another time; the cards you may keep. I think you have done very nicely to-day."

"What kind of a meeting did you have at the chapel? Annie tells me you went out there this morning."

"Indeed we did have a meeting. You ought

to have been there. It was only praying and singing, but it was good. By next Sunday we hope Parson Holloway will be there again; then you must all come. Wont you bring the singing-books along?"

"Very likely I will if I come, and I hope we may all be there unless something prevents that I do not know of now. It has been very good in you to do so much work last week. I hope you will not lose anything by working for the Lord. He always pays well."

"Indeed He does; but there are some of the men who do not think so. There was at first a bit of grumbling about it, and some talked rather rough, but they came round at last and worked like the rest of us."

"But, Mr. Gray, the Lord does not look with pleasure upon any work that is done for Him through compulsion. Do you not know 'the Lord loveth a cheerful giver'? I hardly think the men who so grudgingly gave their time will feel as happy as those who so willingly went to the work. We will hope, however, they will derive some benefit from the services that will be held when the chapel is completed. Do you know whether any of the men at the mines are addicted to drinking habits? I heard that two or three of them were, but I hope I have been misinformed."

"I do not want to tell on any of them, but I think there are two or three who like whiskey too well. I saw one of them drunk once, only once, but it showed he liked it. Your uncle knows all about it."

"How sorry I am! but we must try and teach them some better way to spend their money, or rather how to save and use it. There is no saloon anywhere near the mines, I think."

"Oh no! they get their whiskey right across the road from your house, at Hawley's tavern. Tom Hawley has a license to sell it, so they say; but as he wont sell to everybody, I do not believe it. It is a bad business anyway, miss."

"Yes, it is. I will talk to uncle about it; perhaps he can find out a way to prevent any of your men from getting it, or at least from taking it out to the mines."

"You could do more at that than Mr. Dalton. The men would think he was only afraid they would lose time, and they would drink when he was not about and would not see them. You might tell them it was bad, and they would believe you."

"You need not tell me who the men are that drink. I will give out some temperance papers and cards the next time I am out there. It may do some good."

It was a relief to Hiram Gray not to turn in-

former, for he did not like to be in any way concerned in injuring whatever good name any of his comrades might have. He well knew it would be for the good of the men if they could be induced to give up the practice. Yes, he could look back a few years when he too liked a good drink, as he called it, quite as well as any one; but Parson Holloway got hold of him one day when he was under the influence of liquor and kept him in-doors until he became sober. He then made him so ashamed of his actions. and drew such a true picture of the drunkard's downward course, that Hiram Gray took a solemn oath to abandon the course he was in and never to touch again the accursed stuff; and he kept his promise, and thanked the Lord that the parson got hold of him when he did.

"How would it do for some of you men to get up a temperance club? Perhaps the men who drink might be persuaded to join it, and then how much good would be done."

"Just wait till we have the new church finished and the parson there. We will make things shake then. He will not let any of the men drink if he can help it. You ought to see him, and I suppose you will next Sunday."

"Very well, Mr. Gray; I think we had better go home now. I see Annie is waiting for you. You have a dear little girl. I love her and want her to come and see me very often."

"And she loves you, miss. She talks about you every day—yes, 'most all day. She would live at your house if we would let her. When she comes too often, just send her home again."

"I will," laughing; "when I am tired of any one I can always find some way of getting rid of her; but Annie has not reached that point yet, and I do not think she will very soon. Good-by."

"Good-by, and may the Lord bless you."

We have heard it said that the explorer of a deep cavern, in order to make sure of finding his way out, took a spool of thread, and fastening the end at the entrance, unwound it gradually as he advanced into the recesses of the cave. Thus he still possessed some means of communication with the world he seemed to have left behind him. Just so with Effie Lane. She had her spool of thread, slowly unwinding it as circumstances seemed to require. She had securely fastened the end, at the very entrance upon the work, to the Mercy Seat; and whenever there was any misgiving as to her course she could and did repair to the starting-point. There she always found the light, and could afresh mark out the path which she hoped and trusted would lead securely to the desired end. Sometimes it proved to be the old and well-beaten path she had just traversed, and then with renewed energy she would push on to gain the spot from which she had retraced her steps. With how much firmer tread, with how much more hopeful feeling, did she thus go over the ground, marking each well-remembered spot as she passed it by.

Mentally she saw Annie Gray right near the entrance, and hand in hand they proceeded. Then Lilly Hendricks or old Mrs. Hall was met, each one cheering her as they came into view; and when Hiram Gray and the chapel and the drinking men were encountered she could thank the Lord that he had guided her thus far, and sing,

"Thus far the Lord hath led me on."

But we must not forget that just now we are interested in the work of the chapel. It only required two more weeks to have it in full readiness for occupancy, and it was decided to have no further service until then.

The second Sunday passed quietly. Walter Jones came to the Sunday-school at the railroad. He had heard so much about it, he wanted to see and hear for himself. Mrs. Hall had given everything into Effie's hands, rejoicing that for a

while at least there was some one who could do better than herself. To-day the school was not composed of only twenty or thirty children, as it used to be, but almost as many adults were among the number that crowded into the little room. Effice Lane might have felt slightly embarrassed at seeing them; but they greeted her so kindly in their homely fashion, asking if she would allow them to come in, that she felt about as much at ease as she would have done in her own department at Westford if two or three visitors had entered. It was somewhat in this way that the greeting was given:

"Good afternoon, miss. We had no preaching at the mines to-day, and we thought we would come and hear you sing if you had no objection." It was the singing that proved the attraction.

"Certainly, Mr. Jones. I am glad to have you come. Whom have you here with you?"

"This is my partner, Jake Walters; we work together in the mine. I wanted him to hear you sing and see what a Sunday-school was; he was never in one, so he says."

"Glad you came, Mr. Walters. I trust you can find some place to sit; we are rather crowded to-day. We have very little extra room."

"Don't give yourself any trouble about us;

we can stand; we are used to it more than we are to being in Sunday-school. Walt wanted me to come along with him."

"When we have the new chapel finished I hope there will be room for every one, and that all will come to it every Sunday. Do you go with Mr. Jones to that meeting-house about six miles from here? I think he calls it 'the swampmeeting.' I do not know why."

"No, Miss Effie, it is just beyond the swamp. We know it by that name because we have to cross a big swamp to get to it," spoke up Walter Jones in reply to Effie's question.

This conversation infringed slightly upon the time at which the school usually opened, but there were as yet no inflexible rules to govern them, so that punctuality was not always observed. The hymn-books were distributed as far as their number allowed, two of the little children being deputed for this work. When all was done Effie asked for silence. "Open your books to page twenty-seven, and listen while I sing the first verse."

It was quite a surprise to her, after she said, "I will sing the same verse over again, and if any of you can join me in it I hope you will try," to find so many could join in this opening hymn of praise; but she noticed that her new visitor from the mines did not sing.

"Do you not sing, Mr. Walters? I did not hear your voice among the others."

"No, ma'am," rather uneasily said, "I do not know much about that kind of songs. But I like to hear you sing."

"I hope you will soon know something about our kind of songs. I love to sing these beautiful hymns; they make me feel as if I was getting near to heaven."

"That is just so," said Mr. Jones; "I feel as if I was just there, when I get to singing and praying as our old parson does. He knows all about it: but Jake does not care much for such doings. Wont you sing 'Happy Land'? we all know that; it will just start us up."

Efficiently, but unless she had some particular reason for it she never refused a request of this kind. So with a gentle hint that they should sing it rather softly she commenced. One verse was sung quite satisfactorily, but when the second was fairly under way the torrent could not be checked. Hiram Gray and Walter Jones took the lead, and like the bursting of a mill-dam the waters rushed onward, gaining strength with each line. They had it all their own way; Effie was a listener.

"Oh! but that does my heart good!" said Hiram as they finished, and he wiped the perspira-

tion from his brow. "Yes, I could sing like that all the day."

There was a slight pause, and Effie took up her little Bible and proposed to read a chapter from it. "After I read we will repeat the Lord's Prayer, and I want you all to do it very softly, not in a loud voice. The Lord can hear us when we whisper just as well as when we talk loud. Will you try to remember this?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Very well, I will see how well you remember."

The fifteenth chapter of John was the selected chapter, followed by the twenty-third Psalm. "Now I want you to repeat after me the Lord's Prayer."

To many of those present these were new words. They might have heard them before, but they were so unfamiliar as to be actually new. To others they were not new, but unknown. She therefore repeated the various petitions slowly and paused for her hearers to repeat them after her. Some, as they uttered the words for the first time, felt they were really praying; they could not help it. There was a magnetism in the voice of their leader that was irresistible. If she could not control them in song, she did in this approach to the throne of grace.

Then there followed a short talk to the children, a few words spoken by this timid young missionary that told where her heart was in this work, not only to gather the children and teach them to preserve the sanctity of the Lord's day by refraining from conduct inconsistent with the object for which the day was instituted, but in the positive inculcation of good rather than a negative restraint from evil only.

"Now I want you to sing again, then I will distribute some cards as I did last Sunday."

"You have not heard our verses yet, Miss Effie. You told us to learn them by this Sunday."

"So I did, Annie; have you learned yours? Can you repeat it?"

"Yes, ma'am. 'Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.'"

"That means we must not get tired, even if we do not see right away just what we want. It sometimes takes a great while to build a church, but we must keep at it; we will have it all finished if we do not get weary because the work seems so hard. You thought you could have your little meeting-house out at the mines all finished in one week; but when Saturday night came and you found there was a great deal yet to be done, that was no reason why you should

give up and think there was no use in going on with it; but you kept on, and now you expect to have services in it next Sunday. So you will have your reaping-time because you did not grow weary in what was a good work. There are many other things of greater importance than church buildings, and we must be equally in earnest and persevering with them. One of them is getting Jesus to dwell in our hearts. We can do it if we are really in earnest and do not despair because we do not have all the joy and peace we expected all at once."

Not many of the children had learned their texts. It was something new. Some had tried, but could not remember their verses. "Very well, I am glad you have tried. Perhaps next time you may do better. 'Be not weary,' Annie's text said, and there was a promise with it that you shall succeed if you keep on. Now we must sing again."

Though not so boisterous as in the earlier part of the session, still there was sufficient sound to be heard outside as well as in and even some distance from the house. Hymn after hymn was sung, and even Jake Walters tried to add his voice and join his comrades in one or two of the most familiar tunes, he having heard Jones and Gray sing them at the mines.

"Come again whenever you can; but re-

member next Sunday we are to have meeting at the new chapel. I expect to be there, and then we will try to dedicate the house and give the place a new name."

"Yes, indeed, we will all be there. Good-by. God bless you!"

CHAPTER X.

THE NEW NAME.

In the stone a new name written. REV. 2:17.

PARSON HOLLOWAY was, so far as the knowledge gained from "the schools" was concerned, a rather unlettered man; but he had been taught in the school of Christ. Even with his training there, he needed to be still further educated. His advantages had been few and his library extended little beyond a well-worn copy of the Bible and another one of Pilgrim's Progress that had been given him by a colporter. He had no degrees conferred upon him, and no diploma to which he could point hanging upon the wall of his sitting-room, study, library, and parlor all in one. But he could turn to a text in "the Word" as soon as wanted; and if he could not analyze it as carefully or as fully as some others might have done, he could give the sense of it in his own peculiar style, such as his hearers could easily comprehend.

He was not remarkably prepossessing in personal appearance, but what mattered that? And if he did at times distort his countenance when he got warmed up with his subject, there was

no necessity to watch him in order to keep the thread of his discourse. The tones of his voice would keep you alive, whether you saw him or not, unless you were totally indifferent to the purpose of the meeting.

Perhaps on this Sunday he was more elated than usual. He reached the mines on Saturday evening and had examined the preparations for the meeting the following day. He seemed well satisfied with all that had been done, yet he wanted something more. "See here, brother Jones, how are the people to be called together? The bell has not come, and they ought to know when the preaching is to begin."

"They all know it for ten miles around, and when to come; so what else do you want?"

"I was thinking we might have that old boiler hung up on two posts. We could beat it with a sledge and make it answer the purpose of a bell for the time. Now what do you say to it?"

There was no argument about it; by the help of half a dozen men after sundown it was hoisted clear of the ground in readiness for use the following day.

On Sunday morning when Mr. Dalton and his family came within two miles of the mines their ears caught the sound of the strange summons to the house of God.

"I do believe the parson has rigged up that

old boiler and is using it for a bell. Well, he is welcome to it."

"It is an odd idea. Mr. Holloway must be an original character. I hope he will use good language."

"Why, Winnie, you know he is an illiterate man. His language is quite as good as we could expect. He does cut some of his words rather short, especially when he gets excited, but I have heard some of our college professors do quite as much. However, wait till you see and hear him. I like the old man even if he is a little odd at times, perhaps you would say uncouth; he suits the people he has been preaching to, whether he will suit his congregation today or not."

"Then I suppose if we go to hear him he ought to suit us."

Winnie Dalton had lost none of her oversensitiveness or repugnance to mingling with the common people. A few weeks' residence among them had not removed her desire to keep aloof. She still said, "Do all you choose, Effie, only do not ask me to join you."

She would have preferred to remain at home, but she did not wish to be left alone and she did wish to see how they would do; so that her curiosity was sufficient to overcome her pride.

As they drew nearer to the chapel they were

met by others wending their way on foot in the same direction.

"Good morning, Mr. Dalton; we are all going to meeting this morning." At almost every opening in the woods where a path had been trodden to some lonely cabin hidden from view, some such greeting would be received, and by the time they came in sight of the chapel there was quite a respectable-sized company collected around it, and there stood Walter Jones ringing the improvised bell; near him were Hiram Gray and Jake Walters, who had been taking their turns at the work. Standing in the doorway of the chapel was Parson Holloway, who gave a hearty welcome to the party in the wagon as they drove up.

"Parson, this is my family. We are all here, wife and daughters, and this is my niece, Miss Lane. You have heard of her. You know my son."

"Yes, and a fine lad he is; and this is Miss Effie I hear the men talk so much about. You were here when we had our meeting in the woods. I heard you sing. You will help us to-day. And you are to give the old place a new name. Well, I am glad of that. I believe in dropping off old names; we will all do it some time, and our new name will be a glorious one. Did you bring the hymn-books?"

"Yes, they are under the seat. Will you get them, Willie?"

Services commenced soon after the Daltons arrived. The singing was led by Miss Effie, or perhaps we must say was started, and the new books proved to be quite helpful in this part of the worship. Parson Holloway offered a most fervent prayer, earnestly craving that the Holy Spirit might descend and open every heart and mouth to sing the praise of God. He blessed the Lord for sending Mr. Dalton and his family and Miss Effie to help them, and he thanked him "for the house we give him to-day without any debt on it."

The prayer was rather long, but there seemed to be so much to put into it. It was full of thanksgiving and praise and asking for blessings.

Then singing and then the sermon.

"I think I shall like him after all," whispered Winnie to Effie as the preacher rose to announce his text. Following are some of his remarks:

"Brethren, I am going to talk about something John heard one day when he was put away all by himself on some island out in the sea. He heard the blessed Jesus talking to him and telling him to write a letter to some church a great way off. He did it and it is in the Bible. We have it here in this beautiful Bible Mr.

Dalton gave us, and it is just the same as it is in my old Bible I have at home. They are all just the same, or else they are not Bible at all. John saw a vision; we may not see just such things now, but we have strange dreams. Sometimes I dream I am in heaven, and I wake up to find I am still on earth. But some day I'll wake up and find there is no mistake about it. Then I'll see all John saw and a great deal more. But I want to talk about the letter. It is in the book of Revelation, in the second chapter and seventeenth verse. This letter was written to a church in Pergamos, and the people there were none of the best kind either, though the Lord sent them a letter; they were just about like we are now-a-days, middling fair, some pretty bad; but he says, 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone, A NEW NAME written which no man knoweth saving he which receiveth it."

It was from the handsome new copy of the Holy Bible lying on the desk that the preacher read his text. A beautiful cushion upon which it rested had been made by Miss Cora, while the entire pulpit furniture was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Dalton. The bell, which had not yet arrived, was to be a present from Miss Effie, as she particularly wished to give something.

"You all know your names now. If I call out brother Jones he knows who I mean, and so do you. It is a grand thing to have a name every one knows. We need it here; we could not get along without it; and if I was to give brother Gray a new name, no one would know whom I was talking about until he learned it. Satan knows all our names now, and he has had them all down in his book; but some of them have had a bright red mark drawn right across them, and they have slipped out of his fingers and got over the line into the Lord's pasturefield. They do not want the same black name Satan knows them by, but the good Lord has given them a new name. I think it must be something like his own name. They have gotten into his family now and must be known by his name. Let me read a little from another letter John was told to write. It was to a church in Philadelphia, not here, but somewhere on the other side of the world. He said, 'To him that overcometh I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name.'

"Just think of all that! You who do not know the Lord Jesus will have to go your whole lives with the same miserable name, and when you die you will find it just where Satan wrote it, black as midnight and nothing new about it. No red mark over it. But Sinner, Sinner! SINNER! Lost! Lost! Lost! Here his voice rose to its highest pitch, and there was something about his countenance that revealed his positive assurance of the truth of his words. He continued: "Satan knows what he is about, but he can be caught sometimes. Many a man has gotten away from him, and as soon as the Lord Jesus gets hold of a man he changes his name, Redeemed! Redeemed! Saved! SAVED! That is a new name worth having and keeping. It will last you to the end, and then the name on the white stone will be yours. Let us sing

"' I've been redeemed."

Winnie almost held her breath as the volume of song rolled from the lips of those around her. Even Jake Walters joined in the chorus as soon as he mastered the tune. He could hardly tell why, but the enthusiasm was contagious and he could not resist it.

"Now we are ready for a new name. Are we going to keep out of Satan's way and try to serve the good Lord? Don't talk about turning over a new leaf; just throw all your old books away and get a whole new book. There will be plenty of black marks in it before you

get through with it. And just get Jesus to write his new name on the first page alongside of yours. I tell you it will be hard work for Satan to rub it out when he sees it there. Amen."

Mr. Dalton now walked towards the front of the desk, and turning around to face the congregation said,

"My friends, you wanted to have a church. Our company recognized the many advantages that would be likely to accrue to it as well as to you from having one, and authorized me to build this house. The entire expense would have been met without your assistance, but as it was your desire to have a share in the work it has been granted you, and to-day all that you were not able to do has been done by the company. This house is yours so long as you remain here, and if you leave I trust others may fill your places and the building be kept only for the purpose for which it has been erected. The bell will be here after a while; it has been ordered, and as the steeple is ready for it I hope we will soon hear its tones ringing forth. Now there is one thing yet to be done. What is to be the new name of this growing village? This has been entrusted to Miss Lane, and in her behalf let me say this: Many of you men have come from Scotland, and I have no doubt to you old names are still dear, and we can use these

memories as new names to-day. We can have them here in the woods, and I think they will be recognized as appropriate. Our little chapel is built in the woods. It is emphatically a woodschurch; and you always call your church at home 'the kirk,' so she proposes that the name for the place shall be 'Kirkwood.' This will sound better than Churchwood, and we shall have the two thoughts always linked together, the church you once knew and the new church towards which I hope we are all journeying; at least we ought to be."

"Praise the Lord!" responded Parson Holloway. "I have a drop of old Scotland in my veins. Kirkwood let it be. All who say so say Amen."

Hands and voices were simultaneously raised, and Amens resounded from every throat. The clear broad dialect of the sturdy Scotchmen was very conspicuous among them. Their memories had been stirred by this allusion to their homeland although they had not brought to these wilds very much of the veneration for the timehonored "kirk" that seemed now all at once to be aroused in their bosoms. Two of these very men were among those that Effie had learned would indulge at times in strong drink. She was quite hopeful that some good influence might now be had over them. The thought of

the name was a happy one. It was appropriate, and had now received the sanction of all the men. She felt sure Mr. Hamilton would not object to it, and her anticipations were not disappointed, as a week later a letter from him said, "Just as good as any other; if you and the men are satisfied I am sure we are;" and he added, "Tell Miss Effie when she finds some one to keep house with her I will build her the best one at Kirkwood."

It was truly a day of rejoicing with all the families there, and the people from the surrounding country seemed as if they too possessed some interest in all that had been done.

"It is a good name they have given to the place. My man says Mr. Dalton is a real gentleman, and the best boss he has ever worked for. I wish we could have a house here too; then he would not have to walk so far." This was what Mrs. Holstead said as she went towards her home out in the woods. She was walking along with her three children tugging after her, and overtook one of her nei hbors who did not seem to be quite so enthusiastic over the services.

"It may be, Mrs. Holstead, just as ye say, but wait a bit till a strike comes, and then ye'll see whether Mr. Dalton is the gentleman ye thinks he is."

"But, Mrs. O'Leary, we are not going to

have any strikes here. My man gets his pay all right, and your man could do it too if he worked for Mr. Dalton. Mr. Mears do n't do anything more for him than Mr. Dalton would."

"You are mistaken there, sure ye are. My man would not work for any one that would stop off his whiskey when he wanted it, without his having to walk six miles to get it."

"And what good does the whiskey do you after all? We don't want any, and we get along as well as you do."

"Ye needn't tell me that. I saw your man drunk only last week, and ye know it too. Tom Wilson sold him the whiskey down at Hawley's, and he says he will sell it to any of the men that want it. He don't care for that Dalton man."

"What did you come to the chapel for this morning if you don't think any better of Mr. Dalton than you say you do? You had better have stayed away altogether."

"Ye will never see me there again. I just wanted to see what was going on."

Here was a difficulty that Effie Lane knew nothing of. It was not at all likely that she would hear of it just now; but it was not the only one that was falling across her path. Mike O'Leary was not the only outsider who did not like the appearance of things around the new

mines. He used to work there while Mr. Mears was owner and was trying to get the old place in salable condition; but now that work was being prosecuted on Mr. Mears' own property, he had transferred his labor to more congenial quarters.

Effie was quite wearied when she reached home that afternoon. Not so much from bodily fatigue as from mental strain, for while hopeful she was still fearful lest some unforeseen event should mar the pleasure of the day. Yet when at home again she could say, "Uncle Hugh, it has been a grand success. How kind you have been to these men! I do not believe they will ever desert you or the chapel, no matter what may happen."

"You do not know all these men, Effie. There are troublesome ones all the world over. If they fancy they are being imposed upon they will strike as quick as any other men."

"I do not think so, uncle; at least I hope these will not. They have a chapel now in which they have an interest, and if they love it they will love the people who built it for them."

"I hope you are right; time alone will show."

CHAPTER XI.

IMPROVEMENTS IN PROGRESS.

"What are those stakes for, Jake? Are you going to build another church?"

"Not now. It is for a store, so Mr. Dalton says. A good big one too; and, Jimmy, he says there will be a railroad here in less than five years."

"We may all be out of the way before that time comes; but who is going to keep the store when it is built?"

"I don't know, only it is to be put up right away, and then he is going to build a house for himself."

"Whew!" and the questioner moved on. He was only a passer-by, though he lived but a few miles further on, and at odd times he worked for Mr. Mears, and had some time since performed a few days' work for Mr. Dalton, when the timbers were being cut for the first mining operations.

Let us go over to the Mears tract on a visit. For some months work had been going forward. Such men as could be obtained were placed under the control of an experienced engineer

and were "prospecting for ore." They had wasted much time and spent considerable money and had at last located what they felt sure was a favorable spot for extensive mining operations.

Mr. Mears was not a mean man, as the world counts meanness. He was liberal when he chose to be, but did not always consult the best interests of his men, though he thought he did. In one respect he made a very different beginning from Mr. Dalton, who would not allow whiskey to be brought to the mines, while Mr. Mears saved his men the time and trouble of going to Tom Wilson's or elsewhere by keeping it on the grounds. Any day, and as often as the men wished for it, the barrel was close at hand. In one other respect the men were different. Owing to Mr. Dalton's rule most of the drinking men had gone to Mr. Mears' to work, and they took with them the quarrels and fighting as one of the appurtenances of the whiskey cup.

From the latter evil Mr. Dalton was not entirely exempt. Though visits had been made by his men to the saloon at the railroad, yet they were infrequent and no special notice had thus far been taken of them.

There was plenty of work all that fall for every one who would work, and as the end of

the year drew nigh the song of the saws and the hammers was still heard. At Kirkwood the storehouse was completed and occupied. A new building for a schoolhouse was under roof. Two rows of small but cosey dwellings gave evidence of the number of inmates sheltered within them, and the framework of another and larger house than any yet erected was on the ground ready to be raised. All this gave constant employment to workmen of various kinds.

Extensive improvements were also in progress attendant upon the mining operations. Foundations were being laid for a large furnace which should reduce the ore to merchantable iron, instead of hauling it to the railroad for shipment to other places. Even greater things than this had already been planned for by the company, a rolling-mill and extensive machine-shops being among them. These latter were to be dependent upon the building of a railroad, the project of which was being again discussed.

Christmas came, but how different it was from the Christmas the Daltons had been accustomed to! Not a flake of snow, no ice; everywhere it was "green."

"What do you make of Christmas here, Annie? At home we have grand times. The ground is all covered with snow, sometimes two or three feet deep, and we have sleighing parties and Sunday-school celebrations. Do you ever have anything of the kind here?"

"Why, Miss Effie, we could n't. We never have snow enough to go sleighing, and we don't have any nice times at all. Will you have a Christmas party? it would be so nice."

"I did think somewhat of doing so. Did you ever see a Christmas-tree?"

"I don't know just what you mean. Is it anything like the trees that grow in the woods?"

"Yes, dear, it is very much like them, and one of them will do. I will have a real Christmas-tree for all the children around here, and you will see just what it is like. We will have it the afternoon before Christmas, so that all the children can get home before dark; whether we have any snow or not, we can have our tree two weeks from to-morrow. You may tell every one that it will be at the new chapel, unless it should be a stormy day."

This brought work for every one of the Dalton household. To have such a time for the children as had never been known by any of them entailed thought and contrivance. There were no stores to resort to at a moment's notice. All that would be required must be thought of and the order made out and send to Westford. The little ornaments that had adorned former trees were all sorted over and laid in readiness.

Some of them excited a contemptuous smile from Winnie as she held up faded ribbons or broken toys and contrasted them with the things she knew they would have had "at home."

"No matter, Winnie, we are not in Westford now, neither are these children; and as they have never seen anything better, perhaps they will be pleased with these. I intend to make our tree look as handsome as I can. You know how to make some of those pretty bows and rosettes; will you not make some out of these ribbons? They are a little faded in some places, but I know you can overcome that. Come, Winnie, do help us; Cora and I want the tree to look pretty."

"Oh well, I will help you; but I do not think you ought to give a faded ribbon to any of these girls."

"I have no intention of doing so. I want them simply to brighten the tree; and if the children wish to take them away with them I think they will prize them just as much as you or I would fresh new pieces. Now, Winnie dear, do your best and help us."

And Winnie went to work cheerfully, and the ribbons did not prove to be so utterly valueless and spoiled as she imagined.

"There must be something for every one

who will be likely to be there, not forgetting Parson Holloway. Uncle, shall we leave you to take care of him? You can best find something to please him."

Each one of the family took a share in the work. To Willie was delegated the duty of providing the tree. "A real handsome one, Willie; not too large nor yet too small, for there will be lots of things to put on it." When the day comes we will see how well his part was performed.

Meanwhile Annie Gray had not been idle. Her story of the Christmas-tree that Miss Effie said they were to have grew until it had assumed in the eyes of the community proportions far beyond anything its projector had designed. Those who had seen such things under more favorable circumstances and amid better surroundings did not give much credit to her story. "She can't have such a tree as I have seen," they said. "Good enough for you children that have never been out of the woods; you can't get anything fit to be seen here."

After all that Effie Lane had done or planned to entertain and instruct these people, it seems difficult to believe there were among them any who would make ungracious remarks. There were, however, those who, out of envy or resentment, determined to prevent in advance, if they could, all pleasure being derived from the pro-

posed celebration. The true reason for this was discovered from succeeding events.

Effie heard of some of these unkind words, but they only made her the more determined to succeed even beyond the most sanguine expectations that Annie Gray's story had aroused. She did not care on her own account, but she would not have one of the children disappointed. Her wishes were likely to be realized, as a large packing-box arrived only two days before the contents were needed.

Other preparations were in progress on the far side of the mountain. Work, as we have said, had been going on continuously. The necessary buildings, rude in comparison with those at Kirkwood, had been put up, and apparently considerable work was being done, but no ground was yet set aside for a chapel. "We have no need for that. The men can go where they please on Sunday as long as we do not work." Perhaps Mr. Mears was short-sighted in this, but he did not reason as he did upon another occasion when he wished to prevent his new men running elsewhere to get their whiskey. He had planted no seed from which a place of worship was likely to grow, but rather tares were thickly strewn, from which a harvest was soon to be gathered. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"I say, Mears, will you put me up a little room out at your place? I could keep a few groceries and some little things your men might need, and they would not have to go over to Dalton's for anything. I know you do not like that man's ways any better than I do. He will not let one of his men have any whiskey; he is one of these new-fangled folks that wont drink or let any one else either if they can prevent it. I get ahead of him sometimes. Two of his fellows were in my place last week as drunk as they could be. I let them have all the stuff they could hold, and I think they did not work it off before they got home. Old Holstead could hardly get away from the saloon."

It was Tom Wilson who was speaking. Mr. Mears had stopped in Hawley's tavern, where Tom was the bartender and general manager, and now he wanted to carry on the same kind of business at the spot where so many of his customers lived and worked.

"I do not know about it, Tom. They say you have no right to sell whiskey here. Hawley's license has run out long ago. I do not want to get you into any trouble. I will think about it and let you know."

"All right. But just remember you have no right either to sell it, and I know two barrels of it went over to your place last week." "You are mistaken there. I do not sell it; I give it away. My men need it and I provide it for them. I want to do all I can for them. It is hard enough to keep them at work as it is. I believe they would all go on a strike if I cut their whiskey off."

"Then let me open a saloon there, and there will be no danger. I will pay you a fair price for rent. Let me have it by Christmas, and we will have a grand time and show the Dalton folks we can celebrate as well as they can."

Two weeks was not very much time to think about it in, but, as Tom said, it did not need much of a place to sell whiskey in; so this last remark of his was the deciding point—"as well as Dalton can," and Mr. Mears reached a conclusion at once.

"Very well, Tom. I will put up a shanty for you this week. It will do for a while, till we see how things go. I may put up a good house some time."

"Don't make it too small. I want to have a Christmas-tree in it. Dalton's folks are to have one. We must keep even with them."

"Very well. I will see to that."

Thus were additions made to both settlements, but the results were different. Mr. Dalton was a practical man and only worked after he had thoroughly examined the ground upon

which he designed to expend labor, while Mr. Mears knew nothing of the nature of the work he had undertaken, and the person he employed had no further interest in anything accomplished beyond the money he received for overseeing it. The interest of his employer was quite a secondary matter with him. Yet the main cause lay deeper still. We must take a long journey backward to find it. There it is in Effie Lane's chamber, in the far-away Westford, when she had returned home from Sunday-school and found the motto on the illustrated child's paper that Miss Wilson had given her. Since her first humble effort in her Master's service greater opportunities had continually opened before her, until now the chapel and schoolhouse stood as living witnesses to her ministry. Many other plans for doing good were still being turned over in her mind. "Working for Jesus" had brought great reward.

Christmas came! Need we contrast the two rooms on that eventful day, in each of which was assembled a group of persons intent upon enjoying themselves? There were Christmastrees in each. In one the day was kept simply because it was a holiday, in the other because it commemorated God's greatest and best gift to man. In one the blessed name of Jesus was heard quite as frequently as in the other, but it

was taken in vain in one, in the other spoken with reverence. Men and women engaged in uproarious mirth were heard in one place; men, women, and children engaged in singing songs of praise to the Lord, their Maker and their Friend, in the other. In one there was cursing instead of blessing, tumult instead of peace, and nothing to carry away but wounds and bruises and a stupefied brain; while from the other poured forth a motley group of all ages with happy smiling faces and hands laden with the bounteous supplies of good or beautiful things the now despoiled tree had been laden with. Songs of joy, smiles of gladness, cheers of good-will echoed and reëchoed through the tall pines, and when quiet resumed her sway she was ruler over as peaceful a community as ever gathered to celebrate the coming of the Prince of peace to reign.

Was there a foothold for Him that day at Wilson's saloon? Had He listened to a single song that could awaken an echo in heaven? Or was not that a spot over which the compassionate Jesus might, as he did over Jerusalem of old, drop a tear? "If thou hadst known!"

"Well, parson, did you ever have such a blessed time before? Give us your hand on it. I can hardly keep from crying like a baby. I never felt so good in all my life. I tell you, Miss

Effie is an angel if there ever was one in flesh and blood and bones like us poor folks."

"You are right, brother Gray. I never knew how much a few persons could do if they were minded to do good. I am glad Miss Effie is not an angel, for we might not keep her if she was; but I guess she has an angel in her. See here what she has given me."

"That is nice. 'Holy Bible.' I guess you can almost read that without your glasses; you can now give your old one to some one that has none."

"No, indeed, I cannot do that. I must keep it to remember what I have learned out of it. This new one I will use every day; but this is not all; Mr. Dalton says there is a lot of books in this box for me. 'Commentary' he calls it. I shall be rich when I get all home."

"Well, you are rich now. We are all rich today," for Hiram Gray and Walter Jones were like the children, each one remembered with some useful gift.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW A STRIKE WAS AVERTED.

"LOOK here, Gray, did you hear what Dalton is going to do with those fellows that got drunk last week? If he does what he says he will, I wont work for him any more, and I do not believe any of the men will."

"I never bother myself with what other folks say or do if it does not concern me. If Dick Wills chooses to go over to Mears' to work, it is no reason why I should give up my work and pay and make a fool of myself just because Mr. Dalton will not have a man about the place that gets drunk. I tell you we are better off without such men. I do not care how soon they all go. If you know what is good for you, you will go on working and keep quiet."

There had been mutterings of discontent among two or three of the men ever since the promulgation of Mr. Dalton's rule, "No liquor to be brought to the mines." Wills and Holstead had defied their employer, not exactly in bringing the liquor home in bottled form, but by returning in a drunken state on more than one occasion. The greater part of the past week

they had been on "a regular spree" and had neglected their work. Mr. Dalton had determined to discharge them, thinking the effect might be salutary.

After the Christmas celebration there was a serious disturbance at Wilson's saloon before night had well set in, and Mears had to interfere and order Tom to close his doors. The men were provoked at this — the drunken ones because they were turned out, the half-drunken because they could get no more liquor; and Tom was angry at not being allowed to reap all the benefit he had expected from selling to the men as long as they had money to buy.

A drunken rabble is difficult to control in any case, and Mr. Mears found this one no exception. Threats were freely made, and for a while it looked as if some of them would be put into execution.

This last week of the year little work was done, but a great deal of talking was indulged in. Several secret meetings were held. Some discussed the situation and the change of affairs since Tom Wilson opened his saloon. Formerly whiskey was free. Now it had to be paid for; but they forgot that in some way those who drank it must pay for it, whether they did it in ready money or not. Tom wanted the money at once in exchange for the whiskey asked for,

and the revelry of that one day had sadly depleted the workmen's little store.

The following day added fuel to the already fiercely burning fire, and each succeeding day the blaze rose higher and the flame brighter. On New Year's morning there was a gathering of the men at the open mine. Here there was no chapel to serve as a place of conference; the saloon was not exactly the spot; so the mine was made the rallying-place. There was no banner with grievances emblazoned upon it; there was not even a board with cabalistic signs to be seen; but a great gathering of men, human creatures, beings designed for the enjoyment of peace and happiness, howling like a horde of demons, wildly gesticulating and demanding "Free whiskey or no work." With a yell that might have been started in the regions of unutterable woe they rushed to the office of Mr. Mears, demanding an immediate answer.

"Tom Wilson will supply you with all the whiskey you need. It is better for him to do it, and then you can drink as much or as little as you choose."

"Give us the money, then. Twenty-five cents more wages a day or no work."

Mr. Mears had closed his door and retired to his inner office, leaving the infuriated mob outside. "Let them stop work; I do not care. I will not pay another cent; Dalton's men do twice as much work and I pay as much as he does."

The engineer whom he had employed to superintend the work, and to whom this was addressed, replied,

"Let them strike if they wish to. Most likely Dalton's men will follow, and when work starts up again, perhaps we can get some of the best of his men to work for us. Some of them are grumbling considerably on account of his temperance notions. I do not advise you to stop work of your own accord, only I think it will prove of some advantage if the men do it."

Let us look at the speaker. Were you to enter a room well filled with men of all stations and professions in life, and needed to select one on whom you could rely and with whom your pocketbook with uncounted money would be safe, it would not be George H. Travers. If intelligence of countenance were sought for, you would still pass him by. But if you needed a cunning man, one who would be likely to seize upon any mistake that another might make which he could turn to his own benefit, or one who would not hesitate to use any means in his power to further his own ends, it would not require much discernment to select this man from among his companions. Some men carry

their character stamped upon their countenances, and George H. Travers was one of these.

Mr. Mears had been influenced by him from the commencement of the work. He had acted exclusively upon his advice, and he did not, at this juncture, desire to abandon it. Only he would like the men to stop work peaceably.

There have been many strikes, and there still may be many more, where the men have gone out and no acts of violence have been committed; but seldom, if ever, has this been so where the mob is crazed by the fire of whiskey. There was not much here upon which to wreak their vindictiveness; no buildings of great value had been erected; but all there were they soon put beyond repair. The saloon and the dwellings alone were spared.

Quickly the news reached Kirkwood, "The men at Mears' are on a strike," and words were plenty, and the question was quickly raised, "What shall we do?"

"Do?" said Walter Jones. "Do? Why, go on working just as we have always done. Let the Mears folks take care of themselves. We have nothing to do with them."

"That would not be fair. If we were to strike we would want them to join us. I go in for treating these fellows right."

"Good for you, Holstead, I'm in for it. Let

us see the rest of the men. You will join us, Wills, I know it; come on."

Certainly there were three thus ready to join the strikers. If these had composed the body of workmen they would have carried the day bravely; but there were others.

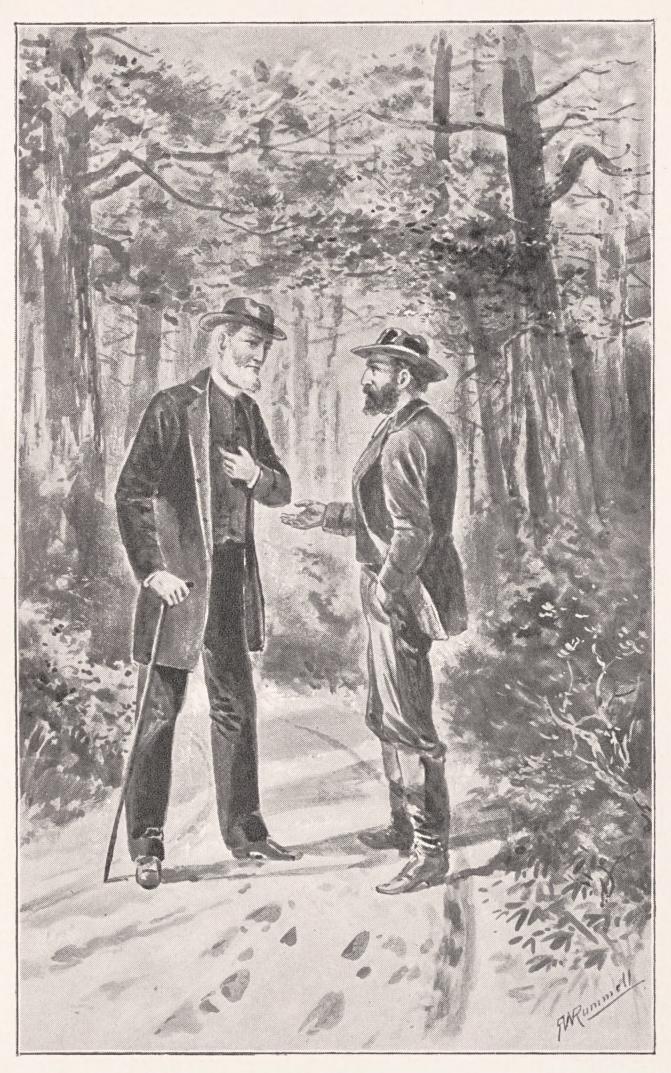
Parson Holloway had been on the ground for a week past, ever since the Christmas festival, and as soon as Walter Jones heard of the strike, and the conclusion the three men had come to, he hunted the parson up.

"See here, parson, we must head this thing off. Let us call a meeting of all the men at the chapel this evening to talk over the matter. Mr. Dalton maybe will come, and you can tell the men how much good a strike will do us."

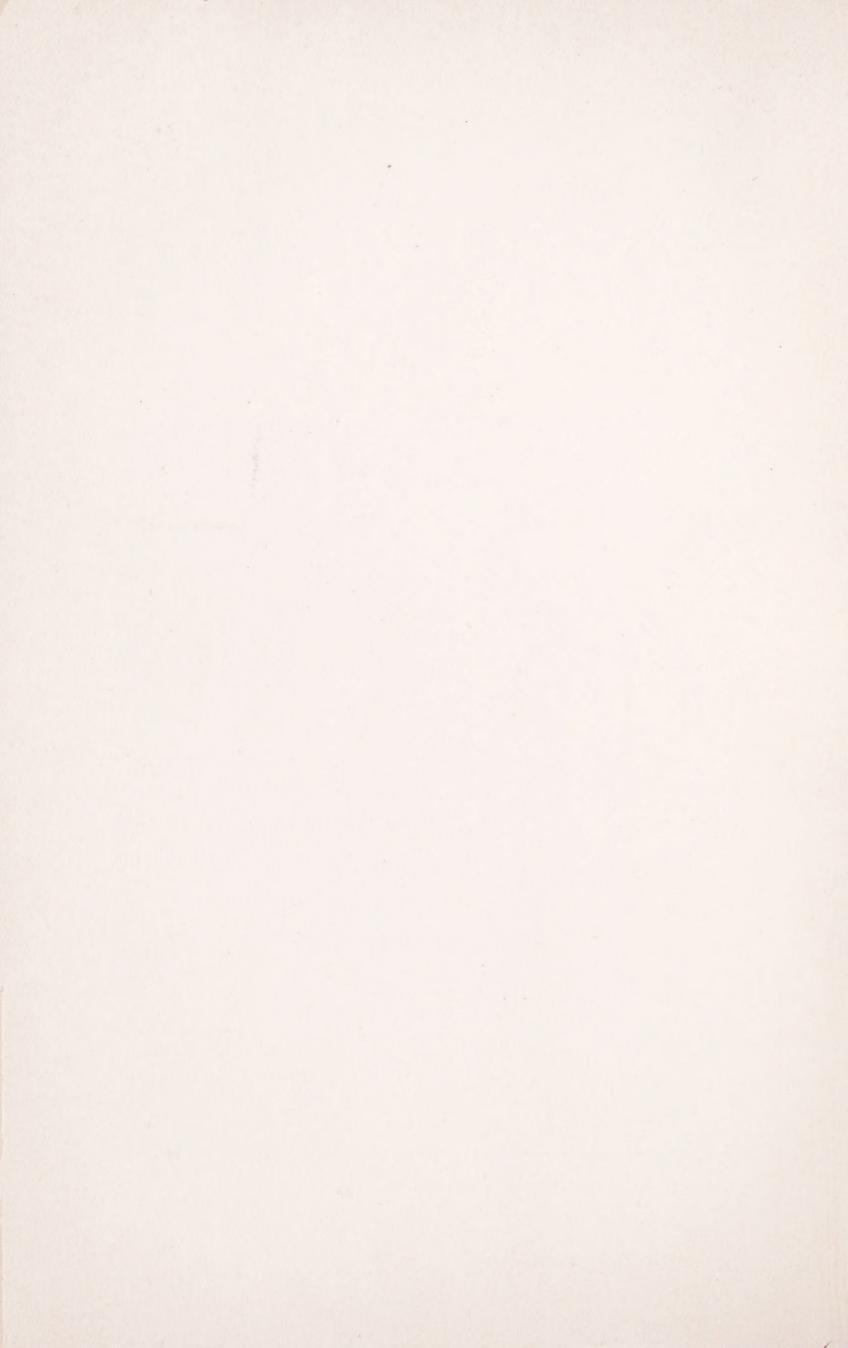
"A good idea, brother Jones. You can say the preacher calls the meeting, and no one need know exactly what it is for more than to discuss the situation."

"But they know all about the strike already. However I think they will come. I will let all the men at the mines know. We will be on hand."

Dick Wills met the parson a few minutes after the trio separated, two having gone towards the mines, and he was on his way to notify a party who were working some distance off in the woods.



In The Pine Woods. Page 169.



- "Halloa, parson, we have you now. None of your close-fisted chaps for us. We are going to teach Dalton we men have rights as well as he has. We are going to strike."
 - "Strike! hey? When?"
- "To-night, to-morrow. Don't know exactly when; but we are going to strike."
 - "Who?"
- "We men who work in the mines and out in the woods."
 - "What for?"
- "Because we wont be bossed over and told just what we must do and where we may go. They have struck over at Mears'."
 - "Who got struck?"

The parson's coolness and assumed curiosity, with his short, quick questions, rather puzzled Dick, who, looking the parson square in the face, said, "You are no fool; you know what I mean. We are not going to work any more until we get our rights. You may bet on that."

"Do not bet, Dick. I know you would lose, and you have no more money than I have. I never can afford to risk any. But come, tell me all about this. I do not care a cent for all they are doing over at Mears'; it does not concern me at all. Just let us have a meeting at the chapel to-night and talk it all over and take a vote. I will go with the majority. That is the fair way,

you know. Come, and let everybody else come. Bring the women and the children, yes, and the babies too."

"No fooling about it, parson. We are in earnest."

"So am I. You may be sure of that. I will strike just as soon as my rights are trampled upon by anybody."

Thus they parted.

"He is a queer old chap anyhow. I believe he was trying to bluff me. But he said he would strike to get his rights, and that is just what we are after. I will make him stick to that."

Such were some of Dick Wills' thoughts as he wended his way through the woods. When he reached the cleared place where he expected to find some men at work not a soul was to be seen. He listened attentively for the sound of the axe, but all was still, and he began to retrace his steps, when he was arrested by a voice,

"Say there, Dick, are you fellows going to strike? We have all gone out over at Mears'."

"What for?" asked Dick.

"The old chap is so mean he will not give us whiskey any more, and if we want any we have to buy it at Tom Wilson's, and he has got to putting too much water in it. We are out for twenty-five cents a day more pay. Mears says he will not pay it. So we have struck."

"For how long?"

"Till we get our rights, if it takes a whole year. What are you going to do at Dalton's?"

"Don't know." And Dick Wills turned into another path and went towards the mines. He found a group of men sitting idly so far as their hands were concerned, but with very busy tongues.

"Well, Dick," Holstead asked, "what did the men say?"

"Did not see them."

"What is the matter with you? No good being so crusty before you are baked. Wait a while, my boy. When the pay stops and no money to buy whiskey, then you may be as short as you please." But nothing was to be gotten out of Dick.

As Parson Holloway expected, nearly all the men and most of the women and some children gathered at the chapel in the evening.

"I move the preacher has the chair and takes charge of this meeting; he is used to such things." Gray's motion was quickly seconded, put, and declared carried, for no one voted against it.

"Well, men, I think whenever we meet in this house we ought to know what we meet for and who will meet with us; and I will ask the Holy Spirit to be here and tell us what all this is for and direct us what to do. Let us pray."

Jake Walters and two or three sitting near him fidgeted considerably, but they were so far front they could not get out without causing some commotion. They had not expected any such opening of their meeting; but now they must see it out and stand by their colors.

Parson Holloway prayed fervently and tears rolled down his cheeks as he closed with the earnest petition, "Good Lord, give us peace for Jesus' sake." One long Amen followed; then the whole company, a few only excepted, rose to their feet shouting at the top of their voices "Amen!" as hearty a response as pastor ever received.

That prayer settled the matter. No earthly power could have reversed or set aside the verdict. No need for another word to be said, but the parson desired to draw a lesson from this.

"I told you to come to this house, for I knew if it was right to strike we ought to have the Holy Spirit as a witness to it. You see what He has done. Holstead, do you want to strike? You are only one, and there are your wife and seven children to vote against you. Where will you get the bread for their empty mouths when the pay stops? And you, Dick Wills, I guess you got cured of your fire this morning as you

went through the woods. I saw you coming home like a hound off his scent. You did not get any good by going on your errand.

"Just let me tell you the only person who would get any good out of a strike here would be Tom Wilson. For when men have nothing to do they are pretty sure to take to drinking. I should not wonder if Tom had more to do with this thing than any one else."

Was there any one anxious about the termination of this affair beside Mr. Dalton and the parson? The conversation that was held in the parlor at Mr. Dalton's after Willie returned in the afternoon, leaving his father at Kirkwood, will show.

"Has there been any real trouble with any of the men, Willie?"

"I do not think any more than what father told you yesterday. I know he intended to discharge those two men, but I do not think he did so to-day. Some of the other men threatened to quit work if these two were discharged. I think it will all blow over; they are to have a meeting at the chapel to-night, and Parson Holloway has gotten ahead of the men by calling the meeting himself."

"Do you think any of the men would do anything to papa? Will he be in any danger?"

"No, Winnie, I do not think any harm will

come to him; he is quite able to take care of himself; besides the parson knows how to manage things. I heard him talking to one of the red-hot fellows this morning, and he cooled him down almost to the freezing point."

"Oh, Willie!" exclaimed Effie.

"Well, if that is too low, say to the temperate degree. I think, Effie, if you had been there you would have laughed to hear the old man talk. He is first rate among these men."

"Yes, and I think he is first rate anywhere. In many things he is an example to some of our more highly educated men. He uses such things as he has, he lets *all* his light shine clearly, while some others hide nine-tenths of theirs behind conventionalities and proprieties."

"You are quite an able defender of our parson, Effie; but I think he is not in need of defence this time. He is in the right of it, and he swings a good hard cudgel, and some of the folks have felt its blows. But after all, Effie, he thinks you did the right thing in getting father to build the chapel, and everybody else thinks so too."

"I am glad he thinks well of it. I know of no reason why he should not be pleased. He sees a nice meeting-house there, and whether he preaches in it or some one else, he ought to rejoice that the truth is proclaimed there. He seems to me like an independent kind of an evangelist, believing that people need first of all to be taught the simple gospel truths and let other things come in afterward. He must of course belong to some one of the regular denominations. I wish I could go out to Kirkwood with uncle in the morning."

"Father will not come home this evening unless something special occurs to bring him in; besides you know I have the horse here, and he cannot come until I go out for him."

"That will be just the thing. I can go out with you in the morning, and we can all three crowd in the buggy to come home."

"I do not care if mother says so. You can take a lunch with you and we can have a picnic-dinner; it is not a bit cold out in the sunshine in the woods; or you can have some corn-bread and bacon at Mrs. Jones; she keeps a supply at all times."

"All right, we will see about it in the morning."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TESTING-POINT REACHED.

Spring-time came again. The early flowers had bloomed and some had faded. The long needles on the pines were shooting out afresh, and the whole face of nature was being arrayed in a garb of the richest green. There had been no snow all winter and but little cool weather. Many a time the papers that came regularly from Westford, as well as letters from the absent friends, would tell of the extreme cold and deep snows in their former home, while here the Dalton family might frequently be seen sitting on the veranda or walking through the shady woods to enjoy the atmosphere laden with the piney odors floating everywhere.

"I really believe I could bear to see a little snow once more or put my skates on for an hour or two," remarked Winnie one day as she and Cora were walking up and down the path in front of the house. "Does it not seem strange not to have any winter? I had no idea what it would be like not to see a single flake of snow. How odd it is."

Their mother was standing on the piazza

and overheard this last remark, and said, "It seems very easy for us to tire of anything we have in abundance, especially when it proves to be a change from the things we have been accustomed to. But you, my daughter, seem to tire of your surroundings wherever you are. Do you not remember our last winter at home? You sighed over the long-continued snow and ice, and thought it would be pleasant to have a little respite."

"Yes, mother, but I do not like too much of any one thing at a time. No matter how good it may be I get surfeited with it. Here we have no snow at all, there too much sometimes for any comfort. If we could have a mixture of the two it would suit me much better. I think if a person could afford it it would be delightful to spend part of each season in different climates, and thus enjoy each one. I admit it is very pleasant here, and you have been much better than you used to be; you have had no cough all winter; and papa is like another man. I do not believe either of you could live at our old home now."

"I should not be surprised if he was to go back for a short visit in a week or two; he was speaking about it yesterday. It will only be a business trip, that is all."

"Do you think, mamma, he will take any of

us? How I wish he could. It would be so nice if we could all go, if it was only for a few weeks. But it would cost too much, I know."

The day had been quite warm and pleasant, and it was towards evening when Mrs. Dalton had this conversation, not thinking that for both of them the trip to Westford was to be a reality, and that in a very short time.

Mr. Dalton had been very busy during the past month, and a large amount of work had been planned, some of which was nearing completion. It seemed absolutely necessary for him to consult in person with Mr. Hamilton and other members of the company as to some details which correspondence through the mail would not satisfactorily settle. They could not come to him, so he must go to them; and the first or second week in April was fixed upon as the time he could be spared with least injury to the work on hand.

Two days later Mr. Dalton on coming home from Kirkwood rather astonished them at the supper-table by asking, "What do you say, mother, would you or Winnie like to go to Westford next week, or perhaps the week following? I can take one of you, and I leave it for you to decide."

"Oh, papa, can you not take both of us? I would not like to go and leave mamma at home.

I know I am selfish, but I do want to go so much. If only one can go of course it must be mother, but do try and take both of us."

"I am afraid to promise, but I will see about it. But how about the housekeeping if both go? What will Willie and Cora do? I know Effie can take care of herself."

"Yes, and the others too, sir," spoke up Effie.

"Do not give yourself any uneasiness on that account; we can manage that very well. Cora and I can take care of Willie and get him enough to eat, and then he can be the head of the family. I do hope you will go, and then we will find out whether we are worth anything. The only thing that would worry me is whether Willie can get along with the men at Kirkwood. Do you think he can?"

"I expect he will go out every day to see that all the men are at work. I shall give Mr. Gray rather more charge than he now has, though no one at the mines will know it. I think I can trust that man; he is a little fiery when he gets aroused, but he has a good head on his shoulders. He is not so profuse in his professions of loyalty as some others are, but I believe him to be every inch as true a man as Jones. If anything was to go wrong I could depend on either of them to side with me, but Gray would be the first.

"There is one drawback to my being away just now: I do not like the way that man Travers is acting. I know he is trying to work underhand to get two or three of our best miners away from us. I do not know certainly that he has offered them higher wages, but I think he has intimated that there would be some advantage gained by making a change. I hope the matter can be settled before I leave. If they want to go I shall not persuade them to stay, only I want them to leave peaceably. If they attempt to stir up any trouble I shall forestall their designs by setting them adrift at once. I think we shall know all about it in a few days, by the first of April perhaps."

And Mr. Dalton and every one else knew all about it rather sooner than some of them expected, although, as he intimated, he was looking for it.

Everything seemed to move on smoothly for the following few days. Parson Holloway had been back again during the week and concluded to stay while Mr. Dalton was away, as he thought the men might be more peaceable if he was on the ground; and then he would be at the chapel three or four Sundays together, and if they wanted they could have some meetings during the week.

Work was being pushed, the heaps of are

were increasing in size and number. Mr. Dalton had all along had in view the erection of a large furnace to reduce all the ore they mined, and not to ship any in its crude state, and it was to consult with the owners that he proposed to go to Westford.

The crisis, though looked for, came unexpectedly. It was the last day of March. Twelve weeks of idleness had not improved the tempers of any of the strikers at Mr. Mears', and Mike O'Leary, who seemed to be something of a leader among them, was not rendered any less sensitive to a word of reproof, no matter from what source it came or what was the occasion for it.

The men were just quitting work for the day at Kirkwood, and were issuing from the mines, when they were confronted by Mike.

"I say, fellows, what are you going to do? Are you going to keep on working? Mister Travers is going to start up to-morrow or some time soon; you can get as good pay as you can here, and you know the work is not half as hard."

Just at that moment Hiram Gray and Dick Wills came out from the shed built over the mouth of the mine where they were working, and heard what Mike had said. Dick had not been at work very steadily for a few weeks past, only as a sort of an extra when he could find employment.

"There, Gray, did I not tell you so? I knew it was so."

The men were gathering around the speakers, and questions and replies came fast and thick. Conversation assumed a rather loud tone and became general.

"No use in your coming over here with any of your tales. You know better; no matter what Travers says. How did he serve the men last Christmas? Any man that goes from here to work for that fellow is—you know just what I mean."

"Don't you say that again or I'll settle you."

"Just as quick as you choose. I will say it again, for it is the truth; you know it yourself. What work have you done for a while back, I would like to know?"

O'Leary, Gray, Wills, and half a dozen or more all talked or yelled at the top of their voices. Oaths were flying around and blows coming from the brawny arms of all.

The tumult reached such a height that Mr. Dalton was alarmed, fearing serious injury might result to some and a bad name be gained by the hitherto peaceful Kirkwood. He hurried from his office towards the mines and sent his son to apprise Parson Holloway of the trouble, knowing if any one could settle it he would be the man.

By the time the parson reached the scene a

general fight was in progress, the larger part hardly knowing what they were fighting about. The loud voice of the parson was quickly heard above the angry tones of the excited crowd.

"See here, men, what does this mean? Stop this fighting, every one of you!" and pressing right into the midst of them he strove to part the combatants both by words and arms.

"What are you doing here? You are at the bottom of the whole thing. Get away from here and let us alone," and giving the parson a heavy blow with his clenched fist, O'Leary added force to his words, and his victim was felled to the ground.

A dozen men of their own stamp might have been in their parson's place, and no one would have raised a finger to help him and the fight would have abated none of its fierceness. But it was "the parson," an old man too, in one sense their leader, who now seemed to be the centre of contention; and every man's hand, that a moment before was against his neighbor, was now turned against the instigator of the whole trouble, and Mr. Travers' lieutenant in the person of O'Leary beat an ignoble retreat.

"The coward, to strike an old man like that! Do you think such a fellow would be telling you the truth? No, indeed, you see now just what he is. But, parson, are you hurt much?"

"No, Gray, I guess not very much. It was rather a hard blow and I feel a little dizzy. I will get over it after a while, but I would like to see that man. I would like to tell him something that would be for his good."

"You will have to go pretty far to do it; he is off farther than you can walk now. Just come home and rest a while."

"You may tell him, the next time you see him, he has hurt himself a great deal more than he did me. I will get over this soon, but it will be many a day before he will get straight again."

The parson was not the only one to get hurt. Gray was not much the worse for his share in the matter, but two of the would-be strikers were considerably injured at the hands of their fellowworkers as soon as it was found they were inclined to help O'Leary. One of them had to be carried to his home and reached it in an unconscious state. It was Dick Wills.

As soon as partial quiet was restored Mr. Dalton thought he could safely leave for home. He did not look for any further trouble that night, whatever the following day might bring with it. It was quite late when he reached home, nearly dark.

"Oh, papa, what has kept you so late? Has anything happened at the mines? You look worried. What is the matter?"

It was Winnie who was asking these questions. Generally the first to meet her father on his return, she had been anxiously watching for the horse and buggy to turn at the end of the lane. The instant she saw them she had run to the door.

"Yes, dear, we are somewhat later than usual, but 'better late than never.' Did you wait supper for us?"

"To be sure we did. We have been looking for you the last hour. What kept you so late?"

"Some of the men got into a fight, and we had to see it through. I think the parson can keep them quiet now if any one can. I am glad he was on the spot. I do not know what we would have done if he had not been there."

By this time Mr. Dalton had reached the hall indoors, and throwing his coat across a chair he hung his hat upon the rack, trying to assume an indifferent tone of voice to conceal if possible his real feelings. But the fact that something had occurred, and not a very light matter either, was very evident to them all.

"Was any one hurt, uncle? How strange it seems that men will fight so."

"Under some circumstances it would be strange, but not when men who have no business to come near us try to induce those who are willing to work to stop work and throw everything into confusion and even ruin. That is just the case. One of Travers' men came over to our place this afternoon and tried to raise a disturbance, telling the men they could get work and better wages at Mr. Mears'. He said they were going to start work to-morrow. They have found out that three months' idleness has not paid very well. It was that worthless, drunken fellow O'Leary that came over, and he and Gray got into a fight somehow, and it soon became general, until the pastor interfered and got the men quieted down some."

"Did Parson Holloway go into the fight, uncle?" asked Effie rather anxiously.

"Yes, indeed he did, and got pretty roughly handled; but he gained the day after all. I hope he will not be iaid up."

"Oh, uncle! did he get hurt? Is there any one to take care of him?"

"Plenty; he is in good hands. I do not think any one would dare to harm him to-night. The man who struck him had to run for his life. That parson is a plucky fellow; he saved us a heap of trouble to-day."

"Suppose the chapel had not been built, and there had been no Parson Holloway there, what would have been the result then?"

"Indeed I do not know. It might have gone

roughly with some of our men. Effie, I think the best work that has been done at Kirkwood yet was the building of that chapel. How many things have grown out of it! Once before a strike was arrested, and to-day we had the parson to help us. The men really seem to like him. No one else could have half the influence over them that he has. And it is all owing to you."

"Oh no, not all to me. But how glad I am I thought of it. When we talked about what we should do if we came here, auntie and I planned many things, mission-schools and a sewing-class, but we never thought of having a chapel built."

"Neither did I, Effie."

Mr. Dalton seemed to think the disturbance would not be revived; and he told his wife that if all was quiet when he went out in the morning most likely they could start for Westford early the following week, and that he would take any two of them who wished to accompany him.

"I know then who it will be," responded Effie at once. "It will be you, auntie, and Winnie. Cora and I have it all planned. We will keep house, and have Annie Gray here to help us with some of the work. I know she will come, and we can teach her so many things in three or four weeks. It will be just grand. Auntie, you

will bring us home some little things to remind us of dear old Westford, and that will be almost as good as if we had gone."

"But I do not like leaving you two girls alone."

"We will have Annie here, and Willie will be at home part of every day and always at night. If anything was to happen, I know Mr. Gray would hurry to assist us."

"Very likely, but you might not be able to get word to him as soon as you wanted his assistance."

"We will have to take that risk. I do not feel at all afraid. I think you will find us all safe when you return."

Where was Winnie during this conversation? Not very far away; she was listening to it all. Not a word of regret that the others could not go with them, nor a single expression of anxiety as to the loneliness of the three who would be left at home for three weeks to care for or entertain themselves alone. She was absorbed in thinking how she would enjoy herself at Westford, what she should buy, and whether she could possibly find time to visit all the old friends she wanted to see. "Only three weeks! I do not believe I can do half the things I want to do in that little time. Papa, can you not stay away longer than that?"

"No, daughter, I cannot. If I went alone I think I should not be away more than ten days, or two weeks at the farthest; but as mother and you will be with me I will allow a little longer; you will need to put all your visiting and everything else into three weeks."

"Well, if you cannot, I suppose I must try to make it do; but I shall be terribly hurried and will not get to see half the girls I want to."

Winnie Dalton and Effie Lane commenced some years previously to weave the fabric of character, one choosing only things that seemed to accord with her pleasures and temporal happiness, regarding more the brightness of the hues she selected than their durability, and in the pattern of her work as it was being delineated day by day might be clearly discerned the word "Self."

The other also wove her fabric, not hastily or in a confused and aimless way, but with thought and care, blending duties and pleasures in a harmonious whole. With a smiling face she could each day show by her acts and words that across her life the name "Jesus" was woven.

Yet Winnie Dalton was a professed follower of Him whose life was not reflected in her life, but whose image was hidden under the cloak of self. The time may come when she may so behold it.

CHAPTER XIV.

EFFIE AS A NURSE.

MR. Dalton found all quiet at Kirkwood upon his return the following morning. Yet he did not fail to perceive then an undercurrent that was not altogether of a peaceful nature. There was still a slight disturbance, but it was kept down by the superior will and determination of the few who were satisfied with their present condition and prospects. A few words might overturn all that had been gained, but as yet quiet brooded over Kirkwood.

As soon as he had seen everything right at his office he started to find the parson, and was glad to meet him at the door of his lodgings, though showing some sign of yesterday's conflict in wearing his arm in a sling.

"I am all right; this will not amount to much. My arm is hurt some, and it feels more comfortable this way than hanging down. It is not broken, and I am thankful for that. But some of the men fared worse than I did. Have you seen Dick Wills? He must be hurt very badly. You had better go down to his house. I should not wonder if he did not get over it.

They got a doctor for him this morning, and he says he is in a bad way."

"Come with me, parson. I will go there at once."

And these two men went to the little cottage where Dick lived. The found him in a worse condition than the parson had represented. His skull had received a severe blow, though it was not fractured. "A doubtful case," was all the doctor could say, for he saw from his surroundings that it was not likely he would receive much care.

Dick was sleeping at the time of their visit, not the healthy sleep of a tired, hard-working man, but the dull heavy slumber of an injured brain.

From this house they went to see Walter Jones, who was also among the injured. He could have come to his work this morning, but as word came to him that nothing would be done until Mr. Dalton came out, he remained quietly at home.

"What are we to do, Mr. Dalton? If Mike O'Leary is coming over here to worry us this way we might as well give up at once. I do not want to have anything to do with him or get into any quarrel with him or any of them; but a man cannot stand his interfering this way; it is against human nature to do it."

"I hardly think Mike will trouble us very much more, but if he does I do not see that I can do anything more to keep him away than you can. But, Jones, who undertook to say there would be no work this morning? Are the men inclined to strike?"

"Not a bit of it. Only the mine boss said he would wait to see what you said about it, and whether the men who sided with Mike when the fuss began were to be let go to work again. He does not want them any more than you do."

"I will see about it. Work will be started as usual after dinner just as if nothing had happened. I do not feel afraid of any further disturbance at present. If any of the men wish to go, let them go. It might be a good plan to let them know it."

Not one able-bodied man failed to respond to the summons; and if forgetfulness could have blotted out the closing hours of yesterday, no one who saw the good order prevailing could have been persuaded that strife and bloodshed had ruled but a few hours previously.

Parson Holloway, not being so tough or hardy as some of the men he came in contact with, received more injury than most of the others did, but his injuries did not keep him indoors or from attending to such matters as pertained to his calling.

"How glad I am it was not my leg; then I could not have walked about. What would these poor fellows do if they could not see me every day among them?"

Dick Wills was in a very bad way. When he awakened from his sleep he was delirious. The doctor had told his wife that he expected this, and they must try and keep him as quiet as possible. Hiram Gray was hardly equal to working that afternoon, so he volunteered to watch Dick and try to keep him in bed. The task was a difficult one, yet he succeeded well, though he said he would have preferred to have been in the mine. Gray had a warm heart even if it was set in a rough case, and though when aroused he could strike a pretty hard blow, he generally had a repenting time when all was over. This was one of those times, and by Dick's bedside he resolved that he would never fight again. But many a good man before his day has done the same thing, and when the provocation came has answered it in the same way.

Yet Hiram Gray meant exactly what he resolved, and not because his resolutions were faulty, but because of the weakness of the flesh, they were unkept.

Dick continued to grow worse: and when Mr. Dalton went home that evening he was doubtful whether he would find him alive on his return in the morning. He reported to his family the varied events of the day.

"Uncle, will you let me go out with you tomorrow? I do not believe those people know how to take care of any one that is badly hurt; perhaps I could help Mrs. Wills."

"Certainly, Effie, you may go with me; but what do you know about nursing a rough man, half crazy all the time? No doubt there are many things about the house you could make a little more comfortable, for his is the worst kept of all the new houses we have built. They take no care of it either outside or in. I shall start right after breakfast, so you will require to be prompt."

She was; and quite as soon as her uncle had his buggy at the door Effie was standing there with a good-sized bundle in her hand.

"What have you there? You need not take a lunch with you. We have that always provided now at Mrs. Jones'."

"No, it is only a few little things I thought might come useful: a few lemons and some nice soft muslin in case any should be wanted to bandage his head."

"If Effie could stay and nurse Dick, I should not wonder if there would be some hope for him. I do not see how with the care he now has there is any chance for his recovery." This was said to Mrs. Dalton by her husband as he was stepping into his buggy, in which Effie had already taken her seat.

"If it would be proper and she wishes to do it, why not let her remain until to-morrow if she can be of any use?"

"I will see about it when we get there. He may not be living."

The drive to Kirkwood was a rapid one, as Mr. Dalton wished to reach there as early as possible. Work had already commenced. The first person seen was the pastor. He had just come from Wills and reported him still alive, but very weak. Once during the night he revived and was all the while calling for a drink. The doctor said he must have nothing but water unless they could get him some lemons.

When lemons were mentioned Effie turned towards her uncle, saying, "You see, I will do some good by coming, at any rate."

When they reached the house they found that Mr. Dalton had not exaggerated the condition of things there. Effic took all in at a glance, and her favorite text came into her mind, "Inasmuch," etc. "Who knows but that Dick may be 'one of these' some day?" she added to herself.

Noiselessly she stepped into the room, meeting Mrs. Wills at the door. "Good morning;

how is Mr. Wills this morning? I have come to see him."

If Dick had ever been called "Mr." before this his wife did not know of it, and it sounded strange to her as she replied, "If you mean Dick, he is pretty bad. There he is; he does not know any one. The doctor says he wont live." And stepping softly up to the poor bed on which the sick man lay, Effie almost agreed with the doctor in the opinion he had expressed.

"Perhaps we can do something to make him a little more comfortable," and laying her hand upon his forehead, she added, "How hot his head is. Do you ever put a cloth wet with cooling water on it?"

"Yes, sometimes, when I can. The doctor said to do it, but I have not time to be standing here all the while."

"Bring me some nice fresh clean water; I have some soft towels here and will fix them and try to keep his head cool." The water was fresh, but the basin in which it was brought looked as if it had never held clean water before. Effie said nothing, but wetting one of her towels carefully, without touching the sides of the vessel, laid it gently on Dick's forehead. Now going to Mrs. Wills she asked for a clean pitcher and some more water, right fresh from the well. "Let me have the pitcher, Mrs. Wills; I will get

the water," was Effie's response to the movement of that woman as the pitcher was handed her. It was not clean enough for her purposes.

"What are you going to do now?"

"I will make Mr. Wills some lemonade. I understood the doctor said he ought to have some; it will help his fever."

"We have not got any lemons; we cannot get any here."

"I know it, but I have some here in this bundle; all I want is the water in this pitcher; I can do all the rest. I have sugar too."

Effie took her little knife from her pocket; and cutting the lemons squeezed the juice into the pitcher and added sugar "to her taste." She even had a spoon to stir it with, but now she needed a cup. When she obtained it it was the cleanest article she had yet seen about the house.

"Is that the way you make lemonade? I never saw any before. Was that salt you put into it?"

"No, indeed, that was the best white sugar. I thought perhaps you might not have this kind, and I brought a little with me; but I must put some fresh cold water on his head."

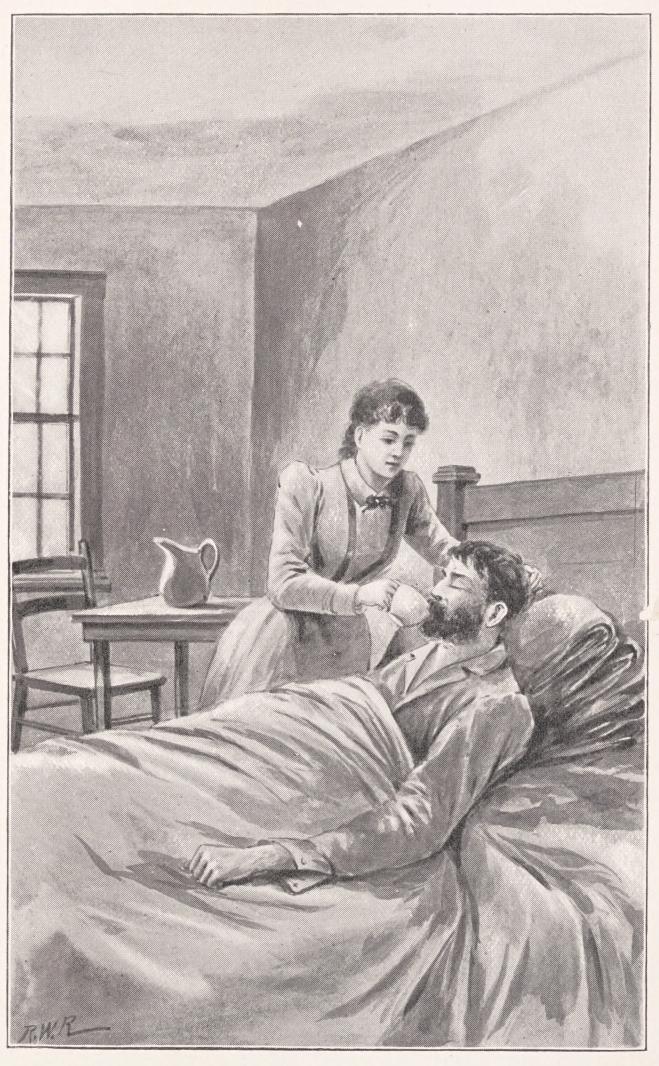
"Must you do it so often as that? I only put it on two or three times and it did not do any good."

"That is the reason; it ought to be renewed as often as it becomes warm; and as he seems so hot and feverish, it should be done every few minutes. There, now he will rest more comfortably, and I will sit here and watch; perhaps he may wake up, and then I will give him a drink of this lemonade."

Mrs. Wills seemed rooted to the spot. She did not have time, so she said, to wait on her husband; but now there was no work so urgent but that she could leave it unattended to. Here was something beyond her comprehension.

"Do not leave your work now, Mrs. Wills. I will watch your husband, and if I need your assistance I will call you. I will just sit here by the window where I can see you." Mrs. Wills slowly moved towards the washtub by the open door at which she was working when Effie came.

It was quiet watching for an hour or more. The sick man's breathing grew less rapid and more natural. Effice renewed the cooling towel every few minutes, and as she was applying it once more Dick slowly opened his eyes. "Drink, drink!" was all he said. Quickly was the cup of refreshing acid drink placed to his parched lips. He did not say it was good, but his nurse knew it tasted so from the eagerness with which it was taken. "More." "You shall have some



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more," and the cup was refilled and given to him again.

Thus until towards evening were the cooling towels and the refreshing drinks slowly but surely doing their work. A few moments were taken by Effie to go to Mrs. Jones' for a little lunch, and when her uncle called to see if she was ready to return home with him he found her fanning Dick, who was sitting up in bed propped on such pillows or old coats as she could find. He was partially conscious and realized that some one other than his wife was waiting upon him, but he did not know who it was.

"No, uncle, I do not think I ought to go home to-night If you will let me stay here, and I can get Mrs. Gray to stay with me, I ought to watch Dick; these people do not know what to do. I think he may get better if he is taken care of."

"Why will it not do for Gray to stay with him, and you can come back again in the morning. I do not want to have you sick so that we cannot get off next week. You must take care of yourself as well as Dick."

"I do not believe that one night will do me any harm, and I know Aunt Ruth can get along one day more without me."

"Do as you think best. I will see Gray,

and let you know what they can do. Unless one of them can come I should not be willing for you to remain. It would not be prudent or even safe."

The Grays were seen. "To be sure, Mr. Dalton, one or both of us will go. Do you think we would let that angel be all alone to watch poor Dick? No, indeed."

And the "angel of mercy," assisted by Mrs. Gray, watched by the bedside of Dick Wills that night. The doctor, considering it altogether a hopeless case, and having much to do, did not call again until the following afternoon. He was doubly surprised upon entering the room, first to see Dick so much improved and able to answer a question, and secondly to find Effie there as the nurse to whose faithful care this change was mainly due.

- "What have you done for him, miss?"
- "Cold water outwardly and lemonade inwardly, that is all. I did not know what else to to."
- "Neither did I. That was exactly what I prescribed, but I saw there was no chance of having my prescription carried out, and I could not remain to attend to it personally. I believe you have saved his life; he has but little fever to-day. Continue the applications, and I will call again to-morrow."

"Doctor, ought he not to have some food? It is nearly two days since he was hurt, and he has had nothing but water and lemonade."

"Yes, provided he could have suitable food," and considerable stress was laid upon that one word; "and I do not suppose any one around here would know how to prepare it. A little chicken-broth with all the fat carefully skimmed off, or some lean beef stewed down and the juice given him a little at a time."

"You mean beef-tea, do you not?"

"Exactly, but who would know anything about it—how to make it or how to use it after it was prepared?"

"Oh yes, I know all about it; but I do not think we could get any beef around here anywhere; perhaps we could find a chicken. I think we can manage it; at least I will do the best I can." And she did. Mrs. Gray started at once to get the chicken, and said she would take it home and cook it. Effie gave her particular directions how to do it, and to make sure that all was going on aright she went around to Mrs. Gray's to take a peep at the broth.

During the day the parson called and was much pleased to note the unexpected improvement.

"It would be a bad day for us, miss, if you were to go away. I hope the good Lord will

find work for you here until He is ready to give you the crown in the better world. I trust you will see the threescore-and-ten in the Master's service."

"That time is a good way off, Mr. Holloway, but I desire to do all the good I can while I live. I think it is a poor way of showing our love for our Heavenly Father to take all his mercies and appropriate all his kindness to our own selfish purposes, and do nothing or but little to help others who may stand in need. I enjoy doing something for other people."

"The Lord will bless you for it, and so will the poor people you are trying to help."

Mr. Dalton did not start from home as early as usual that day, and did not reach Kirkwood until a little after the dinner-hour. As he drove up to Dick Wills' house Cora jumped from the buggy, and her father handed her a good-sized basket covered over with a clean white cloth.

She was met at the door by Effie carrying a bowl with a spoon in it.

"Why, Cora, where did you come from? I have just been over to Mrs. Gray's getting some chicken-broth made for Mr. Wills. But what have you here?"

"Some things mamma made for your patient. Papa told us that he seemed to be getting better, and she thought he ought to have some good food, different from corn-bread and fried bacon. Is he well enough to eat anything?"

"Yes, he can eat some things; but what have you? Let me see," and raising the cloth she found in the basket a glass of jelly, some oatmeal, a small loaf of nice white bread, and several other little things, just such as a convalescent would relish.

"How kind in auntie to think of it, and so thoughtful of you to bring them out!" and Effie felt as grateful for this addition to her stock of supplies as if Dick had been a member of her own family instead of "the worthless chap" her uncle had so often called him. Next to Effie's heart was still her favorite motto, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me."

When evening came Dick seemed so much improved that Mrs. Gray said that she and Mrs. Wills could take all the care of him that he needed: they would give him the medicine the doctor left for him and would not forget the lemonade. "You go home, miss, or you will get sick, wearing yourself out." It was so arranged, and Effie and Cora returned home with Mr. Dalton.

"It is wonderful how careless these people are. I really believe they think they are doing all they can; but Mr. Wills only needed a little

of the right kind of attention. If he had died it would not have been on account of his injury, but from simple ignorant neglect. Do you not think so, uncle?"

"No doubt; and here is an opening for another branch of your missionary enterprise. It will be an addition to your singing, sewing, and Sunday-school work."

"I think there will be no crowding of work, now I have Cora to help me."

CHAPTER XV.

EFFIE AND CORA AS HOUSEKEEPERS.

WHEN Effie and Cora reached home the former was "almost ready to drop," as she said. She had overtaxed her powers of endurance, for this was something she was entirely unaccustomed to. Nursing experience with her had never gone beyond helping when her aunt or one of her cousins complained of slight indisposition; but here she was head nurse in fact, upon whom all the responsibility rested, and all selfassumed too. She felt the situation, but her brave little heart flinched not a moment. Now nature asserted her claim, and Effie, thoroughly wearied, needed a good night's rest. Soon after the evening meal she and Cora retired, and the following day both remained at home, word having been sent them that "Dick was much better and able to sit up."

· Under Mrs. Gray's nursing Dick continued to improve; and Effie did not go again until Sunday. He was likely now to get out before very long.

As soon as Effie entered the house he saw her and called out, "Ask Miss Effie to come in here; I want to see her." On her coming to the bedside, he put out his hand, saying,

"Will you take the hand of such a rough fellow as I am? I know all about it. Gray told me what you have done for me. May God bless you!"

"I hope, Mr. Wills, that God will bless you; and when you get well you must go to the chapel on Sundays and learn what God wants you to do. Do you mean to trust and serve Jesus?"

Here was a direct question; perhaps it was the first time Effie had ever asked it under such circumstances. It was certainly the first time Dick Wills had ever heard it addressed to himself, and he was utterly unable to give her an answer. She repeated it, however, in a rather different form.

"Mr. Wills, the Lord has been very good to you while you were so sick, and you ought to love him for his kindness in sparing you. We thought you might die, but he has let you live. Will you not thank him for it?"

"I cannot tell, miss: I must wait till I get out; then I will see about it."

"Oh no, do not wait. You have not time for that. Something might happen. Men often get hurt in the mines and never get over it. You must not put it off. You will be happier and everything will go smoother and you will not be

quarrelling and fighting all the time. Then, Mr. Wills, you ought to stop drinking whiskey. Was not that lemonade good that I made for you? I hope you will never drink anything stronger than that."

"I will see about it. I must wait till I get about again." This was all that Effie could get from him that morning, and she went to the chapel to join the rest in the worship.

The text for the morning was, "The way of transgressors is hard," and the occurrences of the past week were drawn upon for illustrations of the subject. Very emphatic was the preacher in his denunciations of one man interfering with the work of his neighbor to his injury. "It never succeeds in the long run. Old King David found this out. He said something about the wicked man in his day, and it is good to-day, and one man you all know might learn a lesson from it if he would. This is what he said: 'He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.' I do not wish any one harm, but I find these words in the Bible, and I am sure they are true."

There was also allusion made to Dick Wills by name, and to "the angel" the good Lord had sent to take care of him. "I tell you, friends, the building of this meeting-house is going to be, in the Lord's hands, a saving of all you folks, if you will only let the Lord have his own way about it. It is a hard hill to climb with the old serpent pulling you back, but just put your hands in the Lord's hand and Satan will drop off quickly."

There was to be a Sunday-school meeting after the services, but no formal action was taken, and the Dalton family returned to their home. Effic still kept up her interest in the old log schoolhouse across the railroad, and she spent her hour there this afternoon. The next time Effic saw Dick Wills it was at her own home.

Two days passed by very quietly, though there was considerable work going on at the Dalton home. Early on Wednesday morning the travellers, Mr. and Mrs. Dalton and Winnie, started for Westford. Effie and Cora were left alone, excepting that Annie Gray was to be with them next week and to remain until the rest returned. She could not come this week, as her mother had to be at Dick Wills' so much of the time. Willie Dalton had to go out to Kirkwood every day to see after the general working of the force of men there. Mr. Dalton did not anticipate any trouble, and thought no questions would arise that Willie could not settle satisfactorily.

Annie looked forward to the two weeks to be

spent at Miss Effie's with a great deal of pleasure. It proved to be a time of teaching and learning that under less favorable circumstances might have been simply impossible. All the minutiæ of housekeeping and cooking, so far as she was able to understand them, were duly explained, and ere the time had expired when the travellers were expected home Annie said she was ready to go to housekeeping herself. She certainly knew a great many things she had never heard of before.

Let us go through one day with her. The sun was no earlier a riser than these three housekeepers were. They could bid him good-morning as soon as he showed the upper side of his glowing face over the little hill back of their house; and whether obscured by clouds or shining in his strength it was all the same. They had only a simple breakfast, yet something nice for Willie was always on the table, and Annie saw just how it was prepared and how to make it look inviting. The table-cloth must be smooth and clean, and the knives and forks laid evenly side by side, and every dish placed on the table with regularity. Even the chairs, though there were only four of them, must be in their proper positions.

Effie did not know what to do about "asking the blessing." She had often wished her

uncle would do it, but thus far their meals were commenced in silence. Willie was to be the head of the family, but she did not like to propose it to him; yet her fertile imagination was equal to this emergency, and this was the way she arranged it.

"I think we might have a verse of the Bible to say when we come to the table at breakfast-time at least. Do you not think so, Willie? Suppose we try it, just a single verse, and each one repeat whatever we choose. I have one for this morning. I think it is a very pretty one. It is 'I laid me down and slept: I awaked: for the Lord sustained me.' Now shall we all try it for to-morrow morning? Annie, I know you can learn one. What do you say, Willie?"

"I have no objection, I am sure," Willie replied. So the practice inaugurated this morning became their daily custom until the family were all at home again.

After the meal was partaken of the clearing up came on. This must be done in as methodical a manner as the preparation required. No throwing of the dishes together in a pan to the detriment of handles of cups or edges of saucers or plates, but all of one kind must be placed in a a pile by themselves and carried to the kitchentable, then carefully washed and dried and placed in their proper positions in the cupboard.

The kitchen was then to be cleaned up, swept, and table and chairs put aside nicely.

Then the sweeping and all up-stairs work were done as systematically as if the whole house was occupied. Aferwards sewing and reading were interspersed with music and singing until time to prepare a lunch, for dinner was postponed until Willie's return. The afternoon was generally spent in the wide hall or on the broad piazza. Effie would sometimes read aloud, while Annie sewed on her new dress, the material for which Effie had provided for her. Cora would sometimes lie on the lounge listening to the others or read a book or magazine herself.

The evenings they passed all together, frequently around the organ in the parlor, or if moonlight, by promenading on the piazza. Thus day after day was spent, not monotonously or with clock-like regularity, but each left its own record of time well spent.

The first week passed quickly and smoothly. It was cheered at its close by letters from the travellers. They reached Westford safely: Mrs. Dalton was somewhat wearied with her journey, but two days' rest had refreshed her, and she was quite ready for the anticipated pleasure of visiting among her friends.

"But you can hardly imagine how cold it is," wrote Mrs. Dalton. "There was a heavy frost

this morning and even ice in some places. You, I imagine, are sitting out of doors this afternoon, or trying to pass the time away walking through the lovely pine woods."

Winnie also wrote, but her letter simply told of the persons she had met thus far, and who inquired after "the emigrants in the far-away land." She had a few words to say about the elegant costumes she had seen on the streets and in the store windows that made her feel as if she wanted to be rich. "But what would be the use, after all, in having anything nice where we live? No one could appreciate it; common calicoes or ginghams are good enough for Kirkwood. I saw some lovely jewelry in one of the windows, but I do not suppose Mrs. Gray or Mrs. Jones could tell whether the stones were diamonds or only glass; it would be all the same to them no matter which they were."

From the tenor of her letter it would seem as if a return to her old home had aroused all the dormant characteristics that were found in Winnie in the past.

The reading of the letters gave great pleasure to the home group, and when this extract was read Willie exclaimed, "Just like her! What does she care for except some finery or a fancy dress? Give her a new one every month and she would be happy."

"Oh do not talk so, Willie. Cousin Winnie is a dear good girl, even if she does care more for dress than we do. I should not wonder, if I was as fine-looking and handsome as she is, if I would be quite as fond of finery."

"No, you would not; and besides you are just as handsome as she is, and a great deal more pleasant and cheerful."

"Stop, stop, Willie; let us talk about auntie's letter. Only think, frost and ice, and we have flowers and strawberries. What a contrast!"

"Who has any strawberries, I would like to know?"

"If you will be a good boy you shall have some for supper; but you must not say another word against Winnie."

"I do not care, she is not half as nice as you are," and Willie Dalton ran out the door to avoid the upraised hand, as if it were intended to fall upon his ears.

They had their strawberries and rich cream along with them. Willie received his full share, even if he could not be prevailed upon to be the "good boy" Effie said he must be. She had gained a great influence over him, and though he was full of life and enjoyed a little teasing of his cousin at times, there was nothing he would not do for her if it was in his power; and rather than wound her feelings he would try very hard to restrain the exuberance of his spirits.

Sunday came again. "How shall we do to-day? Shall we shut up the house as we have sometimes done and all go to the chapel? What do you think about it, Effie?" This was Cora's question as they sat at the breakfast-table, after the meal was finished. Each one had repeated a text for the day. Effie's had been, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

"I think we might do as we have done at other times. I shall not be afraid if we only are careful to shut everything up tight. What do you think, Willie? Will there be any danger in it?"

"No, I think not; only if you girls were not afraid to drive, I could stay at home and take care of the house."

"Oh no, I would not like that at all; if we go you will have to go along. I think we will try it." And this was decided upon; preparations were at once commenced for making everything secure, and Willie went to the stable to attend to the horse.

While Effie and Cora were busily engaged in cleaning off the table a knock was heard at the outer door. Upon opening it two rather rough men were seen standing there, who asked for something to eat. This was a very unusual request; seldom was a tramp to be seen in that neighborhood. The presence of these men did not cause any especial alarm, and the food that was remaining on the table was given to them. After partaking of it the men departed. Effie did not notice that they watched her very closely as she was washing and putting away the spoons and forks, but Annie Gray's sharp eyes saw it, though at the time she did not know all it portended.

Willie was going in and out all the time the men were there. He did not particularly like their appearance, but he attributed his dislike to no fear of what they might do or design doing. No one of the family felt suspicious of harm.

The horse and light wagon were at the door in good season, and the four started for Kirk-wood, leaving the house "to take care of itself," as Cora expressed it.

The chapel service was very much as upon former occasions. Parson Holloway was quite as vigorous as usual, excepting that one arm was still helplessly suspended in a sling. He did double duty with the remaining one. His voice had suffered no injury, and his delineation of the text was accompanied with sundry illustrations drawn from the drama enacted two weeks previously.

Effie and Cora called at Dick Wills', and were quite astonished to learn that he was not at home.

"He has not been himself at all for two or three days," said Mrs. Wills; "and this morning he started off to take a tramp through the woods, so he said, and has not come back yet. He went down the road; did you not see him as you came out?"

"No, Mrs. Wills, we did not. I hope nothing will happen to him. I think he will get home all right. We will keep a look-out for him as we return; perhaps he is resting somewhere in the woods or by the roadside."

They did keep as they promised a sharp lookout; but they met no one on the road. On turning the lane that led to their house they saw a man sitting on their front-porch leaning against one of the posts, but not until they were near to the steps did Effie recognize him as Dick Wills.

"Why, Mr. Wills, what are you doing so far away from home? How did you get here? We have just come from your house, and Mrs. Wills said you had gone out for a walk."

"So I did, miss, and did n't intend to come so far; but I just got here in time. They did n't get anything."

"What do you mean? Who did not get any-

thing? Has any one been here?" Instantly the two tramps of the early morning were recalled to Effie's remembrance, and she asked, "Were there two men here while we were away?"

"Yes, miss, I found them here trying to break in. They got frightened when I came up and ran away. I could not run after them, so I just sat down to wait till you came home. I knew you must have gone to the chapel."

"And have you been sitting here all the time? You must come in and have something to eat; you are not able to go home as you are."

"No, miss, I am not. I am pretty tired; it is a long tramp to Kirkwood, as you call it."

"Come in now. I want you to tell us all about it. Where did the men try to break in? Were there only two of them?"

"I suppose that was all; I did not see any more. They were trying to get in at the back door as I came up. As soon as they saw me they ran off towards the woods. I did not know for certain who they were, but I think I have seen them before."

Examination proved Dick's words true. The marks on the door showed where an effort had been made to force it open; but it had been so effectually barred that it would have resisted their attack for some time, even if they had not

been disturbed by Dick's unexpected appearance. An attempt had also been made at one of the windows, but no entrance was effected anywhere.

"You say you are not certain who they were. Do you think they were men who lived near here?"

"No, I think not, but they looked like two men who worked at Mears' a while; they left there soon after the fight at Christmas-time."

"I think you are right, Dick. I remember one of the men who were here this morning looked rather familiar to me; I am sure he was around at Christmas. Tom Wilson could tell all about it; but I would not like to say a word to him; he is so revengeful, he would be sure to do us some harm if he could." This was Willie's opinion.

So far as circumstantial evidence could fasten the act on the two tramps who secured their breakfast and an insight into the household arrangements that morning, Willie and Dick were right. If either of them had gone over to Wilson's saloon at that moment they might have had positive evidence that their surmises were correct. But neither of them went over, and the clew was lost.

"Why did you walk so far from home, Mr. Wills? It was a very tiresome tramp for one so weak as you are. I am afraid you will suffer in

consequence of it. But a good dinner will help you. Come, sit down with us. We always have cold dinners on Sundays excepting a cup of coffee, and that we have hot."

After dinner Effie set out for the schoolhouse to sing a while for the children. "You must stay here until I come back, Mr. Wills. Cora, you had better stay at home. I will take Annie. We will not be away very long."

When the two had passed out of sight Dick, who felt considerably refreshed by his hearty meal, was able to give a rather better account of himself and the reasons for his being found where he was.

"You need not tell her," meaning Miss Effie, "but I can tell you all about it. The fellows at Mears' were mad because she built that meeting-house. I was in Tom Wilson's, but I did not taste a drop. I heard some of the men talking how they were going to pay her up. There was a crowd of them, and they were going to steal her silver while the rest of the folks were away; they said they knew where she kept it. I could not tell which of them was to do it, only it was to be done. I went out and hid in your barn till they came over. I heard them talking, and slipped around in front and came up the lane in front of the house. They ran off just as soon as they saw me. I knew where you were,

and I sat down to wait for you. You need not tell her, but I am glad I was here. I remember her nursing me when I was hurt. She did me more good than the doctor. She cured me."

Cora could hardly make up her mind whether Dick was cured. She was more afraid that Mrs. Wills came nearer the exact state of his condition when she said "Dick was n't exactly himself," and that his long story was a piece of his own imagining, the result of a diseased mind. Yet there were threads of probability interwoven with it that pointed to the truth. She listened attentively, intending to rehearse the whole to Effie, notwithstanding the twice-repeated injunction not to tell her.

"Mr. Wills, you had better remain here tonight and not attempt to walk home; it is too far. Do you think Mrs. Wills would be uneasy about you if you did not return?"

"No, but I had better be going. I can make it before it gets dark. No one will disturb you to-night. You need not be afraid."

"But perhaps they may waylay you and harm you, because they will think you know who they are. You had better stay and go out early in the morning with Willie."

"It is kind indeed you are, just as when you nursed me; but I had better be off now."

"Well, if you will go, you must ride part of

the way, and if those men are watching for you they will think you are going to ride all the way."

This was Effie's plan, and it was carried out. Effie, Cora, and Annie, so far as outward appearances indicated, were left alone. Yet they were not alone. Effie's faith in the presence of the Comforter made them feel secure.

About dusk Willie returned, and after a profitable evening spent in reading, singing, and recounting the wonderful providential occurrences of the day, they returned to their beds, trusting that He who had thus far watched over them would not desert them now.

CHAPTER XVI.

UNEXPECTED RESULTS.

The fact that an attempt had been made to rob Mr. Dalton's house in broad daylight while the family were all absent, and on Sunday too, soon became the subject of comment throughout that little community. Dick Wills carried the news to Kirkwood, and Annie Gray told it to the children at Sunday-school.

"It was all on her account, as if she had ever done any harm to one of them! It is too bad; but I am glad they did not get anything." More than one of the few neighbors around them thus gave vent to their feelings, but none of the frequenters of Tom Wilson's saloon were to be heard expressing regrets at the attempt that was made, nor dared they utter a word of regret on account of the failure.

It would have been an easy matter to have organized a band of men at Kirkwood to scour the country in search of the guilty parties, but Willie said there would be no use in doing it. "The men got nothing, and I do not believe they or any one else will try it again." It was therefore allowed to rest, so far as any action

was concerned, but not so if words only were taken into account. Yet it did not all end in talk. There were results that might not have come about through ordinary means, which showed that the contrivances of ill-disposed men may work for the good of those they design to injure.

We remember the attempt of Mike O'Leary to create a disturbance at Kirkwood. He did not seem to be altogether disconcerted at his failure, yet he was too much of a coward to make a second attempt in the same way. There was some reason for this. It was generally supposed that he knew something of this affair, though no one openly accused him of it. On the following Wednesday, as Effie was crossing the railroad to go to the log schoolhouse to attend her usual sewing-class, she was accosted by a rough, ungainly man, who asked,

"Is Mister Dalton at home yet?"

Effie had never seen Mike, and did not know the man who spoke to her. She answered in her usual pleasant tone, "No, sir, he has not returned yet, but his son is at the house: perhaps he could tell you anything you wish to know."

"It is not the boy I want to see, it is the old man. I want to get square with him."

"You will have to wait another week, sir; he

expects to be at home by that time. I do not know you. Do you work at Kirkwood?"

"No, I do not. Mike O'Leary would never work for such folks."

"So you are Mr. O'Leary. I'll tell Mr. Dalton you wish to see him, when he returns." And Mike retraced his steps towards the saloon.

At the mention of this name Effic trembled, yet she showed no outward signs of her inward fear. "What can this man want with Uncle Hugh?" She knew it could not be for any good purpose, being well aware of the character he bore and of her uncle's estimation of him. She therefore replied in as unconcerned a tone as possible. As soon as the man left her she started towards the house, where she had left Cora and Annie, who intended to follow her to the sewing-class.

"I think we had better have our sewingschool here this afternoon; I do not like to go away from the house while that man is in the neighborhood. Do you not think so, Cora?"

"Yes, no doubt it would be safer; but Willie, you know, is at home, and he could take care of everything. But let us have the girls here this time."

"Annie, will you go over to the schoolhouse and tell all the girls to come here? We will have our school on our back-porch, and then we can have some singing, and I will play for you on the organ."

"How nice that will be, Miss Effie;" and off Annie ran on her errand.

"I wonder what that man could want with father. Did he say what it was? I wish Mr. Gray or some one would come. How strange it was that Mr. Wills came all the way here on Sunday just in time to save our house from being robbed."

"Yes, Cora dear, it did seem strange; but I have heard of such things before. Persons have been led to do things they could give no reason for doing, excepting that they felt as if they must act as they did, and they have been the means of thwarting some evil design or warding off some threatening danger. We cannot account for such occurrences by any process of human reasoning, and to my mind the matter is made no clearer by saying, 'It just happened.' Cora, there is no such thing as chance. God does not work in that way; and I believe he has something to do with everything that concerns our welfare."

At this moment Annie Gray, at the head of a troop of girls, came running up the steps.

"Here we are, Miss Effie; I found them all waiting for you, wondering why you came as far as the railroad and then turned back. I told

them you did not like to leave the house shut up while Mike was about."

"Oh, Annie, you ought not to have said so, for I have nothing against Mike excepting that he is a rather quarrelsome man. I do not know that he would have done any harm, only I thought it would be quite as safe to meet here to-day, and I think it will be quite as nice, for you know we are to have some help in our singing."

"Yes, ma'am, but my father says Mike's a bad man, and I know he would not trust him with anything."

"No matter about that now. We are all here; let us sing something to get our minds interested with some good thoughts and words."

Soon Mike O'Leary and Tom Wilson were dismissed from that merry little company, and their names were buried beneath the patchwork and their words were drowned beneath the clatter of twenty little tongues. There was no mother Dalton in the back-room to-day to come forth with a tray of puffy doughnuts, but it was just as happy a company without them, and when evening drew near they all went home, leaving many a "Thank you" behind them for the sweet song with which Effie and Cora dismissed them.

Consultation in the evening resulted in the

decision to have Dick Wills come to stay at the house until Mr. Dalton returned. "He does not know much, but he is able to do little things around out of doors that will keep him employed," was Willie's opinion. But Effie had another plan in readiness as soon as Dick's name was proposed.

"Willie, could not Dick take care of the garden, and get our vegetable beds in better shape than they are? He may not know much about such work, but you can show him, I think."

"All right. He will do anything for you if you ask him. He was a good trumpeter of your fame at Kirkwood. He thinks there never was any one like you and he does not believe there ever will be."

"What is it you want, Willie? I know there must be something: you are trying to get me into a good humor with myself through poor Dick's gratitude. Come, tell it right out; what is it you want?"

"Nothing but a good dinner for to-morrow that no one else can get beside myself. I did not have any yesterday."

"Why, Willie, Cora put your dinner up for you nicely, and you did not bring the bucket home in the evening, I remember. What became of it?"

"That is exactly what I would like to know.

I put it in the office, just where I always have done; but when I felt as if it was about time to appropriate the contents it was nowhere to be seen—kettle and contents all gone. As it had neither hands nor feet, something that was possessed of both must know how it got out the office door. I will fix it for the next fellow who tries that game. It will not taste quite so good."

"Did you go without any lunch till you returned home?"

"Oh no. Mrs. Jones had some corn-bread and bacon."

Dick Wills, when informed of the plan proposed, heartily assented to it. He was glad of the opportunity of doing something, even if it would not be as good as working in the mine. His head was not altogether free from trouble, but it was really wonderful that he was able to do anything. He came with Willie when he returned on Thursday evening.

There seemed to be no actual necessity for his presence, but there was a sense of security in having him which they had not enjoyed for a week or more: and Dick was enjoying himself. "This is only a sort of play," he would say; but the plants and shrubbery in the garden looked in much better order for his playing among them.

"Has O'Leary been around here much,

miss?" he asked one morning. "He is a bad fellow, and it would be no loss if he would take himself away. It was an ugly whack he gave me, and I owe him a grudge for it. Some of these days we will have a settling time, when I get well."

"No, Mike has only been here once that I know of, and if he is the ugly fellow you say he is, I think you had better let him alone. Do you not know it always takes two to make a quarrel? If he wants to be one of them, and finds no one to join him, there will be no quarrel. Let him try it a while and see what will come of it."

"It is easy enough to talk, miss, but I tell you when Mike comes round it a'n't hard to get up a fuss pretty quick. Gray was the first one to take him up that evening, and you know what he is."

"Yes, I know everything about it; but I do not think Mr. Gray did a wise thing at all. If he had passed on and taken no notice of Mike, there might have been no trouble. A fire soon burns out if no fuel is thrown upon it. You try it the next time you meet him, or any one who seems disposed to quarrel; I think you will get along all the better for it."

"No doubt you are right, but I could n't do it. Weak as I am, I would fight. It's in me." As soon as it was known that Dick Wills had gone to stay with the ladies until Mr. Dalton returned, Parson Holloway called all the men together in the chapel that evening. Very few were absent. There was considerable talk outside around the door as well as inside until the parson made his appearance. "What is all this about?" "Is there going to be any more trouble?" Many questions were asked, but no one seemed able to give a satisfactory answer.

"I want to talk with you. Come inside and we will find out what is going on. There is trouble, and we must put a stop to it at once." At Mr. Holloway's bidding all entered the church and quickly settled down into an orderly and comparatively quiet company.

"I want to know who is boss at this place. Who pays your wages and gives you the work you have every day? Is it that man Travers over at Mears', or Mr. Dalton, who is getting that fine house built right here to live in? Just tell me, and then we can settle this thing right away. Do you want Travers for boss or no?"

The "No" was echoed over and over again from all parts of the room. "Then tell me what is the good of letting one of his men do it for him?" And Parson Holloway brought his clenched fist down on the desk with such force that it fairly rebounded from the contact.

"See here, parson, you know I am not much of a meeting man, but I'm for fair play. Dalton has treated us fellows about right, and I'm for standing by him. I've got nothing to do with that other man, and I say let us get him out of the country. We are better off without him. I do not believe in trying to stop men from working when they want to go on."

No one expected that Bart Hendricks would have come out like this, but it showed how thorough the revulsion of feeling was. Two weeks ago he was ready for a strike or for anything else but work, and he and O'Leary had more than one secret meeting on the subject. The affray at the mine, when the parson was so roughly handled, was the outcropping of their consultations, but something had wrought a change.

Dick Wills and Hendricks were close companions; and when the former was so badly hurt and so kindly and tenderly cared for by Miss Effie, Hendricks saw or heard it all. It set his rather sluggish mind to thinking, and by this time the idea seemed to have penetrated his head that steady work and good pay were better than little work and uncertain pay when it would be earned. There was also another fact that seemed to stand out before him: a comfortable house to live in rather than an old broken-down

one no better than those that had been torn down at Kirkwood. "And if I do n't care about going to their chapel, I need n't say anything against those who want to go."

When the parson asked all who were satisfied with what they had to hold up their hands, Bart Hendricks held up *both* of his.

"Now we are going to stand by Mr. Dalton fair and square. No going back of what you have said. Mind you, it is a promise you are making, as binding as if you were in a court of justice and were promising on the Book. Every one of you that will stand by Mr. Dalton stand up, so that I can see you."

If there were any doubting ones before, there seemed none now; every man in the chapel was on his feet in an instant.

"Three cheers for Mr. Dalton!" This was Walter Jones' voice. He had said but little, but could restrain himself no longer; and even if they were in the chapel, he must give expression in a more emphatic manner to his pent-up feelings. "I say three cheers for Mr. Dalton. What do you say, parson?"

"All right, it is in a good cause," and the cheers rang out in no half-hearted tone.

"And now three more for Miss Effie!"

The first seemed to be the expression of goodwill, but that which followed was vastly more.

As the parson stood at the desk he saw for once his congregation utterly beyond his control. Cheer after cheer, clapping of hands and waving of hats, showed whence the torrent had been let loose, and he could not restrain it, but sat down till the cyclone of enthusiasm had spent its force.

"Can't you put it all down on paper, as they do at the political meetings, and give it to Mr. Dalton when he gets back?"

"No, we cannot, but we can tell him all about it, and I move when we stop work to-morrow we all go over to his new house and clean up all the rubbish around it, for his boy says he will be home in three or four days."

"Good! good! We will do it," and the response was almost as hearty as the cheers that preceded.

When Mr. Dalton went away three weeks since, Kirkwood was resting under a cloudy sky. The storm might break upon the little community at any moment. To-day, when his return is looked for, the sky is bright, not a single cloud above the horizon. Peace is brooding over the scene. Angry passions subdued, contentment reigns supreme. How is all this?

Hiram Gray would tell you "Miss Effie has done it all."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TRAVELLERS' RETURN.

It was a beautiful spring morning, though there was still a chilliness in the air, when Mr. and Mrs. Dalton and Winnie started on their return. It had proved to be a delightful excursion to each one, though in a different way. Mr. Dalton's report of the present condition of the mines was altogether satisfactory to the company, and the various plans he had formed for improvement received the unqualified approval of the owners.

"How about that chapel business?" inquired Mr. Hamilton. "You have made no report as to its cost; at least I see no separate account of it; and each item of expense seems to be set down under its proper head, this one alone excepted. How is this?" As the president of the company he had given Mr. Dalton the needed authority to build, and it seemed but right that he should know whether the amount expended was a just one.

"I did not intend just now to say anything about that matter, but you ought to know.

There is nothing charged on your accounts for work on the chapel; all that the company furnished was the material we found already there. The men volunteered to give one week's work at the building, and so much was accomplished in that time that I paid them for the work that was needed to finish it so far as it has been done; there are a few little matters yet that will need attention. The bell my niece insisted on paying for. So it seems to have been a sort of coöperation building, and the men think all the more of it on that account."

"I do not altogether agree with you, sir. It was very well for the men to have some interest in the house, but I've no doubt they would feel better disposed towards the company if they knew that we had paid for the balance which their work did not cover. So, Mr. Dalton, I must insist on its being charged to us."

"They think that has been done already, and I see no reason for disturbing our accounts. Yet I must do whatever you direct, though I would prefer letting it remain as it is."

"Very well, then in your next account, the first of July, let that appear charged in the quarter's expenses. I feel as though the company owes your niece Miss Lane some token of our appreciation of her interest in the welfare of our men and their families. Do you know of any-

thing she would like to have anywhere within moderate limits—from a needle to a piano?"

"I think her aunt could tell rather better than I can, but it would be more of a surprise if no one of the family knew anything about it until it was received."

"Very well, just as you say. I will consult my wife; perhaps she can suggest something appropriate."

This was all that passed between these two men on the subject, and Mr. Dalton was left in ignorance as to what the present might be, only he had the range of thought "from a needle to a piano;" sufficient to furnish an entire house could be named within the limits. While considerable conversation was indulged in on the subject of the presents they were taking home to the four who were awaiting their coming, not so much as a word did Mr. Dalton hint as to anything beyond what his own money had paid for.

Four! Yes, Annie was included, and if they had known that Dick was one of the household he too would have been remembered, if it had been no more than by a jack-knife or a pair of good strong boots.

As they neared their destination the change in temperature was very marked, as well as the difference in the appearance of the vegetation. The two days of travel brought them through the belt for early vegetables and small fruits. When they left Westford there were none, but as they reached home these were in abundance.

It was a beautiful morning when they left Westford, and it was equally bright when they landed from the train in sight of their own home. Being expected, there was a delegation of the entire household to meet them. Dick alone remained at the end of the lane, ready to render assistance in carrying bundles if called upon.

"Oh how glad we are to see you! Dear auntie, how are you? and Uncle Hugh and Winnie? I can't tell you how glad we are to have you all at home again."

"And how are you, little housekeeper? No one has run off with you while we were away and could not keep an eye upon you. How has it been, Cora? Have you had much company?"

"Oh, papa, you know we never have any at all. No one comes to see us but Effie's little girls; we have had them every week. Yes, one day, I forgot, we had two callers for breakfast, not very agreeable ones either."

"Bears or catamounts? There are a few back on the hills, but I did not suppose they would venture so near us as this." "You might call them by such names, but our visitors walked on two legs and were not of the fur-clad species. They asked for what they wanted the first time they came, but the second time politeness was left behind them."

"Yes, father, they had two tramps, real tramps. It was Sunday morning, and when we had all gone to the chapel they came again and tried to break into the house; but Dick had just been out for a walk, and reached here in time to frighten them away. He has been here most of the time since then to watch."

"Thank you, Dick. How is that head of yours by this time?"

"Rather weak, sir, but a mighty sight better than when you went away. I can't do much but play at work a little in your garden."

"Well, I am glad to get home again; it is tiresome travelling for two whole days. I know I did not get much supper last night," interrupted Winnie at this point in the conversation. "I hope Effie has something real good for breakfast, for I am ravenously hungry."

"We will do the best we can for you, Cousin Winnie; but you know we are rather restricted as to variety. However, no one will hurry you to-day, as there is no train waiting for you. I fear you are tired out, auntie; do not go up stairs; breakfast will be ready in a moment."

Winnie had already gone to her room "to fix up," and was hardly restored to "a good-humored girl" when Annie knocked at her door. "Please, Miss Winnie, will you come down? Breakfast is on the table."

"Tell them not to wait for me. I will be there in a few minutes; I am changing my dress." And they sat down to the table without her.

Effie was doubtful what she ought to do, now the older members of the family were at home, but she thought, "Perhaps the rest will like our plan as well as we do," and when all were seated she said, "Aunt Ruth, we have all had a Bible verse to repeat every morning since you went away. Shall we repeat them to-day?"

"Certainly, my dear. I am glad you have been making such a good beginning for your day's duties. I shall be glad to hear you." And as usual the four verses were repeated, Effie taking the lead and Annie Gray ending.

"May I also join you in this morning exercise?"

"Oh will you? that will be so nice. I am glad you approve of it."

"'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name," slowly repeated Mrs. Dalton, adding, "Truly I can bless him for His wonderful loving care over us all while we have been separated from each other."

Thus with thankful hearts they were prepared to partake of the food set before them. Effie had said they were somewhat restricted as to variety, yet an epicure need not have found fault with that breakfast. Fresh berries from a neighbor's garden, hot biscuits just from the oven, fragrant coffee, fried chicken, and some nicely dressed salad, were the staple articles; and there was no lack of other dainties that set off a table to advantage.

Winnie made her appearance before the rest of the family had quite finished, but she had not the pleasure of seeing how prettily the table was arranged.

"What did you see, Winnie, and whom? Did you run across any of our boys who used to go to West-End School?"

"Indeed, I did not. I never run about hunting boys."

There was a general laugh at this remark of Winnie's, and Cora ventured to suggest, "Perhaps some of the boys may have been hunting you up. How was it?"

"I do not know why you must all set to work teasing me just as soon as I get home. I did not see any of your boys. I had scarcely time enough to hunt up some of my own friends."

"I hope you saw Miss Williams and gave her

my message, and Mr. Reynolds. How I would like to see both of them again!"

"Yes, I saw Miss Williams one morning at church, but I had so little time to say anything I really forget whether I delivered your message or not. I did get to speak to Mr. Reynolds; he looked just as blue as ever. Mr. Harrison extended the tips of his fingers and hoped I was well, but he shook hands with mamma as if he would leave nothing of hands or arms by the time he got through."

"I imagine he discriminated on account of his knowledge of the individuals," said Willie, with a sly twinkle in his eye.

But we need not follow them in that table-talk. It was finished about as soon as the eatables were, and all retired from the dining-room, Effic remarking, "I am not ready to resign my position as head of the kitchen department. Perhaps by to-morrow I may hand over the reins to auntie, but for to-day Cora and Annie and I will see to everything."

"For all that I care you can keep them altogether; it will suit me quite as well."

"Winnie dear, just before you went away you wanted to be mistress of the home department and relinquish the foreign field exclusively to me. Have you become a convert to foreign missionary work in so short a time?"

"Hush, Effie, do not be foolish; you know very well what I mean."

Yes, Effie knew all about it, and she surmised that her cousin had not enjoyed her visit to Westford as much as her mother had done; still she felt sure it would only take a few days of home life to restore her to "a good-humored girl." We know something of her previous "spells," and we agree with Effie.

Nothing but their personal baggage came in the same train with the travellers. Mr. Dalton had so much to send of various kinds of machinery, etc., that he had chartered a car to go all the way through without being unloaded, and some of their baggage was to be forwarded in it. Some things were however not ready when they left Westford, and they were left in charge of an old friend to have safely placed in the car.

Mr. Hamilton had a hand in this delay. He had some packages to put in the car also that could hardly be classed as machinery, and which he did not wish seen until they all had reached their destination.

On the arrival of the car the machinery was first unloaded. It was heavy and required time and strength to remove it. Then came a large box marked "Mr. Dalton, with the compliments of Mr. Hamilton." Another, not quite so bulky, "Miss Dalton, with Mr. Hamilton's regards."

"That I know is intended for me," remarked Winnie. "If it had been for Cora it would have had her name upon it."

"Yes, dear, I suppose it would. So no doubt as you are the elder you may lay claim to it; but there seem to be several boxes yet. I see one that looks a little suspicious on account of size."

"It is a piano, I know. Oh, papa, did you buy a piano?"

"No, daughter, I did not, and I know nothing of this one. Perhaps it has gotten in our car by mistake."

"Oh! I hope it is for me. I have wanted one so much. That old organ of ours is almost good for nothing. Can you see whose name is on it, father?"

"Not yet; the name must be on the other side. Perhaps some one has sent it to me."

"Nonsense, papa, what would you do with a piano?"

While the talking was in progress the men were busy with the heavy box, but sundry smaller packages also were being passed out, and at last nothing but the piano remained. It stood on the platform where all could see it, plainly marked,

"MISS EFFIE LANE.

WITH THE BEST WISHES AND COMPLIMENTS
OF THE COMPANY."

There was silence for a moment. Winnie had not a word to say. "Hamilton did that, I know," was Mr. Dalton's comment. "Whew!" was all Willie could say, for it was his favorite way of expressing his astonishment; while Effie burst into tears and hid her face on Cora's shoulder.

"You deserve it, my darling," Mrs. Dalton said, as she laid her hand on Effie's head, "and I am glad Mr. Hamilton has appreciated your work."

"Oh no, auntie. Why, what have I done?"

The piano had absorbed so much of their attention the other boxes were almost overlooked. When they came to be sorted out it was discovered that no one had been forgotten, not even Mr. Dalton; for him there was a large and comfortable chair. Willie had a splendid saddle and bridle with a card attached: "Get a good horse as soon as you can, and use him." Mrs. Dalton had a sewing-table with all the needful drawers and pockets fully furnished, as though she really lived in a heathen land where no supplies could be obtained. Winnie had a handsome cabinet, and Cora a pair of elegant oilpaintings beautifully framed. All these had been placed in the car without the knowledge of Mr. Dalton.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A BUSY SEASON.

Mr. Dalton was well satisfied with the aspect of affairs at Kirkwood, and secretly he could not but admit that his niece, Effie Lane, had more influence over the roughest of his men that he could have, notwithstanding the authority with which his position clothed him. Yet he failed to attribute it to the proper source.

"After all, she is a woman, and in that fact lies the secret of her success." If he had been asked the question, "Could your own daughter Winnie, whom you consider so bright and captivating, calm the angry passions of those men, or win their confidence as Effie has done?" he would have no satisfactory reason to give for a negative reply unless it would be, "They are different girls: one has a turn for such work and the other has not." Thus the real cause for the quiet and prosperity at Kirkwood was hidden from his sight, not so much on account of its obscurity as because he did not wish to acknowledge it. With all this indifference on the surface, there was beneath it a feeling that

Effie must be actuated by some greater power than human ingenuity or wisdom could give her.

If Hugh Dalton could have taken the time to sift this matter to the bottom, he might have reached a satisfactory solution of this question. But he was too busy, and he was not the first man nor the only one who has given the same excuse for delay and putting off serious matters for a more convenient season.

No sooner had the working force been gotten in good trim than plans were laid for extensive improvements. A large foundry was to be built in connection with the furnace, and after that a rolling-mill. This would give employment to a very large force of men. Quite a number of skilled mechanics were to come on as soon as accommodations could be provided for them, and a large temporary building was erected. Home carpenters were equal to this, and all who would work were given employment. Among them were two men who had worked for a short time for Mr. Mears, but left his employ without giving any reason for it. Mr. Dalton was rather suspicious at first, but they assured him they would do an honest day's work and not occasion any trouble. "Very well," said he, "I shall keep a sharp watch upon you, and if I notice anything out of the way I will discharge you without further notice."

"All right; we will do the square thing by you, never you fear;" and they joined the other workmen, but were closely watched by the head carpenter as well as by Mr. Dalton himself whenever he was on the ground.

The house at the railroad station had now been occupied by the Daltons through the year for which it had been engaged, and the house at Kirkwood was about ready to move into. Great preparations were made for the moving. We remember the grounds around it had all been cleaned up by the men. "A very nice job they made of it," so Mr. Jones said. It did look clean, but it was still as bare a spot as could be found anywhere: not a blade of grass or flower or anything of the kind inside the fence.

"No matter, uncle; we can soon make it look better. We can take some flowers from our garden here, for they are ours, and certainly Mr. Dubois will not object to it. I will speak to him and find out what he thinks about it."

"Very well; if any one can find the way to his heart I am sure you can. He said he would be over here some time to-day, so you will have a good chance to ask him."

A few loads of household goods were despatched during that day to the new home, and Willie was actively employed at the old home

to see that all was done right, while Mr. Dalton superintended the unloading and placing in the new house each article as it was received.

A part of one load Effie seemed particularly interested in. Do not think it was her piano. Oh no! that she left entirely to the strong arms of the men, directed by her uncle and Willie; her special care was a large box of plants and flowers. Mr. Dubois came to the house as he said he would that evening, and Effie at once attacked him. She succeeded, as she usually did with anything she was bent upon accomplishing, and received all the flowers she wanted.

Some trailing vines soon made a home of the lattice-work around the porch, and in a few weeks this woodland home was as pleasant and fully as comfortable as the one they had abandoned. A happy family were sheltered beneath its roof.

There was work enough to keep hands and brains busy, and even Winnie found little time to brood over disappointment that the piano was not for her, yet there was still a jealous feeling rankling in her bosom. "Mrs. Hamilton only sent her compliments with her present to me, but Mr. Hamilton sent his best wishes to Effie. Well, I suppose, as he was a gentleman, he thought he must say something very nice. I do not care anyhow."

But Winnie Dalton did care, and her manner of referring to the piano only showed how deep the feeling was penetrating, and she was nursing it until it had become an open sore.

Effie bore the insinuations calmly, and one day said, "I almost wish Mr. Hamilton had sent the piano to you, Winnie, much as I prize the gift. I think you would have appreciated it more than even your beautiful cabinet, and I should have been perfectly delighted with that. Besides, what particular difference does it make? It is as much for you to practise on as for any one else; it stands in the parlor and is for family use. I hope you will not feel as if no one dare touch it but I; it makes me feel sorry Mr. Hamilton was so kind to me, if you act so about it."

The more Effie tried to smooth over the unpleasantness the more it seemed to grow, and she concluded it would be better to let the subject drop, though she had a frank talk with her aunt about it.

"I am sorry Winnie acts as she does. I cannot account for it. I know Mr. Hamilton appreciates your work here among the men, and your uncle only told him the plain facts in the matter. I do not wonder he felt as though something was due you, and this was his way of manifesting it. I had no idea it would produce any unkind feeling between you and Winnie. I

know it is not on your part. I hope it will soon wear off. Do you intend to give up your sewing-class at the old schoolhouse?"

"I shall have to do so, auntie. I could not get there with any regularity, only just as uncle or Willie were going over, and even then I might not be able to stay long enough to do any good. But I think there are quite enough children around us; I can have my hands full here. Did not uncle say several other families would come as soon as houses could be ready for them?"

"I think he said something of the kind. I expect there will be opportunities for the employment of all your spare time. Did you know Annie Gray was here this morning while you were at Mrs. Wills'?"

"No, auntie, I did not. Did she want to see me for anything in particular?"

"Not that I know of; she said she had finished the piece of work you had fixed for her, and she had nothing more to sew at. I gave her some towels to hem, and told her to come back with them when they were done. I thought I would give them to her, but I did not tell her so. I wanted to see how nicely she would hem them."

"I wish Winnie would take a fancy to Annie, she is such a dear little girl. Can we not contrive some way to get her interested in Annie?



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It might draw her out of herself and be the commencement of some work on her part for the poor children. Auntie, do you think we can get her to help in the Sunday-school? for we must get that in operation. You and Cora, with whatever I can do, may not be all that will be needed. Try and think of some plan."

That evening the opportunity for trying came, and Mrs. Dalton availed herself of it. They were seated on the piazza as Annie Gray came in the yard. Seeing Effie, she came to the foot of the steps, saying, "Please, Miss Effie, I have all those towels hemmed."

"Bring them to me, Annie, if you mean those I gave to you this morning," and Annie came up the steps and handed to Mrs. Dalton the three towels. "You have finished them quickly and nicely too. You are improving in your sewing. After a while I think you will be able to do something larger than this. Now I am going to give these to you for your own. You must take care of them, but I want you to use them."

"Thank you, ma'am, I will be very careful of them. We do not have any as nice as these: so I will always know them."

"Annie, I want you to come with me up to my room." And Effie Lane took the delighted little girl by the hand and went into the house. We need not enter with them, but will listen to the conversation that took place on the piazza when Mrs. Dalton and her two daughters were left alone. There was silence for a moment or two; Winnie was the first to break it.

"I think that child is a real wonder, considering the few advantages she has had. Here in the woods, where people live almost like heathen, one cannot expect very much; but she seems quite capable of improvement. Do you not think so, mamma?"

"I do most certainly, and with proper training I think she may develop into a neat and intelligent child. But she will need careful watching, for no doubt, like most children, if left to herself she will grow careless. That was one reason I wished her to think she was hemming those towels for me. If I had given them to her before they were hemmed they might have been used just as they were, or carelessly done at the best."

"I wish I could do things like you. I should have given her the towels and told her to hem them and keep them for her own, and taken no further thought about the matter."

"There need be no trouble about doing such things in the way I took to do it, and I know of no better way than beginning at this very point. Here is Annie already interested in improvement but needing training. Why not take her under your special care and oversight?"

"Oh no! that would never do. Effie would put a decided veto upon any such plan; but I might help sometimes if she would let me, and have the child here to sew a while, when I felt like it and Effie was out hunting up little heathen."

"I think you are mistaken. Effie has so much on her hands now, and with the Sunday-school next week, she needs to be relieved. I feel sure she would relinquish Annie to your care. You ought to have some share in the missionary work we talked so much about a year ago; here will be your opportunity. Annie wants to make a patchwork quilt all by herself; she will need to be shown how to match the pieces together. Will you undertake to show her? I will provide the patches. Between you I think good work ought to result."

"I will try; but I am afraid I shall get out of patience if she does her work poorly."

"To prevent that give her the closest attention, and see that no room for poor work is allowed. She will try to do her best if you show a desire to teach her."

"But how about Effie? Will she be satisfied? I do not wish to interfere in her work, and this would be taking something out of her hands."

"I know she will be glad of it, and even more than glad. She is really anxious that you should help, only she did not like to ask you, thinking you might not like to come into too close contact with these children. But as Annie has improved considerably since we first met with her, we thought you would not object now."

"Well, I suppose I was rather foolish before, but I can hardly yet bear to have some of them too near me. I think Effie ought to be a Sister of Charity, she delights so much in that kind of work."

but she neither bears the name nor wears the garb the members of that peculiar organization do. There is no need for withdrawing from the enjoyment of the good things our kind Heavenly Father gives, and practising uncalled-for and useless self-imposed mortification. They live in the belief that penances will pass for a change of heart, and that they can gain heaven by a life of good works. You were not educated in that way, neither was Effie; but her good works spring from a desire to benefit those she comes in contact with; not to gain favor with her Maker, but because she already enjoys his love."

"You know what I mean, mamma. I would not like to see our Effie going about in a black dress and a white bonnet, though I believe she does more good than some who dress in that way. I guess I am not of much account anyway. I never did like such work; you remember how I got out of humor with myself about my Sunday-school class, it was such thankless work."

"Suppose we all try to commence anew just where we left off when we turned our backs upon Westford. There is as much need of workers here as there. Sunday-school, for instance; let us try to make our work as successful as I believe it was there."

"I do not know about Sunday-school; we must wait till the time comes. One thing at a time is the best way, for me at least. The patchwork first." At this point in the conversation Annie Gray was heard descending the stairs and coming out on to the piazza; she was greeted by Mrs. Dalton.

"Annie dear, do you want to make a patchwork quilt? I think you said so a few days since. If you do, Winnie will help you, and I will find sufficient calico for you to commence with at least."

"Oh, Mrs. Dalton, I would indeed like to do it. Miss Effie did show us how, but I never could get the pieces straight. I will try ever so hard if Miss Winnie will teach me. When will you begin?" "Almost any time; it will not make much difference to me," was Winnie's reply.

"But, my dear," interposed Mrs. Dalton, "it would be best to have some fixed time for it, for Annie might come some time when you were otherwise engaged. Suppose you fix one hour on three days of the week, and be regular. This will teach each of you promptness and the lesson will be a valuable one. If you will commence to-morrow, Thursday, at nine o'clock—or if that is too early for you, say ten o'clock—then Saturday at the same hour, and on Tuesday following, will give you the three lessons. You need not be very particular about limiting it to just one hour, only do not let it become wearisome; be prompt in commencing and stop when either one is tired. How will that do?"

"You know exactly how to arrange everything; that will suit me. Now, Annie, remember to-morrow morning at—. What hour will be best, mamma?"

"If I must decide that I would suggest nine o'clock, and then your lesson will be over before the heat of the day."

"Then remember, Annie, to be here by nine o'clock. I will have some calico for you to begin with. Do not come any sooner, but be sure to be on time. Now good-night."

Cora sat a silent listener during this conver-

sation. When Annie had gone down the steps after again thanking Mrs. Dalton for the towels, Winnie said she was tired and would go to her room. "You can come whenever you are ready, Cora."

As soon as Winnie was out of sight or hearing, Cora said, "Mamma, I think sister is about the most half-hearted girl I ever knew. She is not a bit like Effie. I do not believe she will keep at the patchwork over a week, if she does that long, unless Annie succeeds in winning her by her sweetness. I hope Winnie will keep it up; if she fails I will finish it for her if you have no objection."

"Certainly under such circumstances I could not object, but I hope there will be no necessity for it. Your sister can do very well if she will forget herself and think of those she is helping. Everything that tends to elevate the self-respect and develop the desire for improvement in the youthful mind is in my opinion a step gained in the greater work of soul culture. Winnie has a good heart, only it needs just now something to warm it up. There seems to be a coldness and deadness about it that our present surroundings have helped to intensify. If the smouldering life can only be brought to the surface, she may prove to be a useful woman even in this unfavorable atmosphere."

"If you expect this, I hope nothing may disappoint you; your faith is stronger than mine; but Effie, I know, will agree with you."

When Effie came down from her room, which she did before her aunt and Cora had left the piazza, she was told of the conversation and the resolution that seemed to be the outcome of it.

"I am glad, and hope nothing may discourage Winnie. I do not think she can help but love Annie, and if she does not weary of her work she may make a very fair seamstress out of her little pupil. She is eager to learn, and in this I have the greatest hope."

The following morning Annie and her new teacher were both prompt, and the first lesson of cutting and basting the squares occupied all of the hour. "We will not sew any of them together excepting one that I will do to show you how they will look when finished. This is the way," and Annie silently and intently watched Winnie's nimble fingers run up the seams.

"Do you think I can ever sew as fast as you do?"

"Yes, if you try; I see no reason why you should not."

"I will try."

CHAPTER XIX.

SPIRITUAL BUILDING.

How quickly a building rises towards the upper air after the foundation has been securely laid! No matter how contracted the space may have been or how inconvenient for the work to be accomplished, as soon as the beauty of the building commences to show and its stately proportions are being developed, the drawbacks at the beginning and the various disappointments encountered are soon lost sight of, and the whole energy and thought are centred upon the responsibilities of the present.

But not without some master-mind at the head, and constant vigilance, does the structure approach completion. "Forty and six years," we are told, were consumed in building the temple at Jerusalem, and we can almost wonder at the slowness with which stone upon stone was laid. Yet it was all to be destroyed, and "Not one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Thus the grandest displays of man's ingenuity and skill are so frail that the powers of nature or even human force can overturn them. Not so the work that God is building.

He plants, and by his word alone causes structures to arise that no power on earth can overcome. The foundation once laid is designed to endure.

At first the building may seem to be of little account. Like the gentle voice of Effie Lane speaking to a little child or singing some sweet hymn of praise to the gathered group of listening ears, one little stone is placed on the secure "corner" and cemented to the next and the next by love. No artifice of man can delay or hinder the progress, except for a while.

It was in this way Effie was building—not so much for time as for eternity. She copied from her Master's example, made the care of the body subservient to the welfare of the soul. He was mindful of the temporal necessities of the multitudes who flocked to hear him as well as their immortal interests. He healed sick bodies as well as spoke forgiveness to sin-sick souls. Effie could do neither, but she strove for the earthly comfort of the little ones around her, and tried to point them to Him who could forgive and save.

Her work was not without its reward. The cup of cold water was freely handed forth, and while she was favored to see the influence it exerted, she was by faith rejoicing in the still greater and unseen reward.

The work was slow. No sudden uplifting of the flood-gates and an unrestrained torrent permitted to rush through and then the stream allowed to languish and suffer drought. It was rather the quiet flow of deeper waters, showing a fulness of current that the parching heat of summer could not waste nor the blasts of winter chill.

A year rolled by. The work planned for the furnaces and the rolling-mill was nearing completion. Effice wondered whether the large number of men now employed would still be needed. Some of them had brought their families, while others were single.

The time was at hand when work of some kinds would cease; what would these men do? Mr. Dalton had been so closely occupied with the various operations that were under way that he had no time to think of this. In fact he might say, and perhaps truthfully so, "It is no particular concern of mine." But some one else made it a subject of special concern.

Among the single young men were two of whom nothing was known when they came to Kirkwood seeking work. They represented themselves as good mechanics and employment was given them. They kept very much by themselves, and while there was no excessive coarseness or roughness among the workmen

at large, these two seldom joined them in any sports. Sunday was always a quiet day with them. The practice of hunting and fishing was mostly abandoned through Effie's influence, and the chapel was the place of general resort. Parson Holloway still acted as their leader. He was quite infirm, but as the people wished it he remained at Kirkwood. Some of the late comers would have desired a more cultivated preacher, but they were satisfied to leave the present condition of chapel matters undisturbed.

It was noticed that neither of these two young men ever attended the services, and Effie, to whom it was told, supposed there must be some particular reason for it, which, if a valid one, she ought not to disturb. Yet she desired to know the grounds for their absence. The parson had, on more than one occasion when on his way to the chapel on Sunday morning, asked them to join him, but a respectful declination was all he received.

This was the state of affairs when Effie concluded she would try what could be done. She waited her opportunity. It came.

"Effie, did you know there is a strange minister here to-day? I saw him get out of the stage and heard him ask where the preacher lived. I was almost tempted to send him over here, but Mr. Watson directed him to the parson."

"No, Willie, I heard nothing of it. Do you know who he is or the object of his coming? How do you know he is a minister?"

"Not a word beyond what I have told you. Mr. Watson did not know him, and if you had seen him you would have said he was a minister from the kind of a coat he had on. The parson is bringing him. You will have to entertain him, for father is out in the woods."

There was hardly time for Willie to take himself out of the way ere the two preachers came up the steps and a knock at the door was heard. Effie went to the door. "Good morning, Mr. Holloway; walk in, please."

"Thank you, Miss Effie; this is brother Anderson from K—. He came in the stage this morning; he wants to lecture in the chapel this evening. Rather short notice, but do you think the men would come?"

"Indeed, sir, I cannot tell. You ought to see Uncle Hugh. He would know more about it than I do. What kind of a lecture is it?"

"An historical lecture, miss. I have been travelling for some months on account of my health, and desire to weave pleasure and instruction together. I do not do it for profit; there will be no charge for admission; all I ask is to be

cared for—food and shelter while here. I understand you have no public-house, so I am forced to rely upon the kindness of those who may be willing to entertain me."

"I cannot say anything about it. Uncle will no doubt be at home for dinner. You had better see him."

"I suppose that will be my only course to pursue. Shall I walk around among the men and call at some of the houses? Perhaps I can discover what they may think about it. I will endeavor to be back to meet your uncle. What time do you dine?"

"Usually at one o'clock, sometimes a little later."

Mrs. Dalton did not come into the parlor during this visit, and as soon as Mr. Anderson left Effie sought her aunt and told her of the interview, adding, "There is something about the man I do not like. I wish I could see Uncle Hugh before he encourages Mr. Anderson to lecture. He may be all right, but I did not like his manner or his appearance. I treated him with civility; that was all I could do. I wonder whether the apostle Paul, if he were living in these days, would urge so strongly the entertainment of strangers. I do not believe Mr. Anderson is an angel in disguise."

About noon Mr. Dalton returned from the

woods, and went directly to his office instead of coming to the house. Effie saw him and at once went over to see him. She was not any too soon, for Mr. Anderson had been watching and supposed Mr. Dalton to be the person he wished to see. Effie was the first to come and beckoned to her uncle to come to the house for just a minute.

It did not require much time to tell all Effie knew or suspected, and Mr. Dalton returned to his office to find this Mr. Anderson seated in his large chair. He immediately arose and extending his hand, said, "I presume I am addressing Mr. Dalton. My name is Anderson, a stranger in this part, travelling on account of my health. I heard of your neat little village and concluded to pay you a short visit. I understand you have a chapel, and I would like to deliver a lecture, a free lecture, for your people. I was talking to your parson, and he favors my project, and your niece also heartily indorses it, but preferred my consulting you on the subject. Would you also be inclined to further my plan?"

Mr. Anderson had given Mr. Dalton no opportunity to a reply even to his first salutation; but as there was a question now to be answered he said, "That would rest very much with Mr. Holloway; we have placed the chapel for the present in his care. If he desires to open it

for a lecture I should not oppose him; but no doubt he will come to consult me, and then he will let you know. My niece informs me you have no place to stay in. We will accommodate you while here. It is about our dinner-hour; will you walk over with me?"

"Thank you. It will be my only resource, as I found your parson was not prepared for strangers."

Mr. Anderson had given Mr. Dalton his full name, and was introduced to the family as the Rev. John Q. Anderson of K——. He was accorded the seat of honor at the table. In due conventional style he asked a blessing on the food placed before them, as well as upon those who were gathered around the table—not in the simple language of honest Walter Jones, but in set phrases, as one who felt his right to do it.

"Now, Mr. Anderson, you will have to excuse me for a while; I have some special business on hand requiring my attention. No doubt you will find Mr. Holloway at his house, and you can make yourself at home here until I am at liberty, when we can see about your lecture." Mr. Dalton went over to his office. Somewhat to his surprise he found waiting his coming the two men of whom we have spoken.

"What is up now? It is after two o'clock and you ought to be at work. Have you quit?"

- "No, sir, not quite so bad as that; but do you know that man who came here in the stage this morning?"
- "I do not, only he introduced himself as the Rev. John Q. Anderson of K——, and wanted to lecture in the chapel this evening. Why do you ask?"
- "Simply because he is trying to impose on you. His name is not Anderson, and he is not a minister at all. He goes around the country where he is unknown and passes himself off as a preacher; and at some places where we know he has been he would have been lynched if he had not gone away secretly by night. Just ask him if he ever lectured at Waldoville, and if he knows Harry Sanders."
- "This is certainly very strange. Are you prepared to stand by what you have said? Will you face him and repeat all you have told me?"
- "Indeed we will. That is the reason we stayed away from work, so as to let you know. We saw him go to your house and thought he would impose on your family as he has done in other places. Did he tell you he was travelling for his health and that he was suffering from a cold caught in the jail at Brown City?"
- "He spoke of poor health, but volunteered nothing about being in jail. Suppose we go over to the house at once."

"Right away, sir, if you wish it." The three walked over to the house. Upon entering they found Winnie at the piano, and the Rev. J. Q. Anderson at her side singing while she played an accompaniment.

"That is the man; just the way he did at Brown City—sponged upon one of the families and passed himself off as a preacher; could sing hymns as pious as any one, and at night try to get off with all the money and jewelry he could lay hands upon. Let us go in."

"Good afternoon, Mr. Harold. When did you get here? You seem to be having a good time of it. More comfortable than the little cell in Brown City jail."

"You are mistaken, gentlemen. I do not know Mr. Harold. Will you allow me, Mr. Dalton, to be insulted by these men here under your roof? It is my misfortune, I suppose, to be taken for some one else. I appeal to you for protection from these rough men."

"I will protect any one who deserves it; but if all that these men have told me is true I shall not only not protect you, but will assist you to leave this place as soon as possible. Please get your hat and come to my office at once." Without any formal "Good-by" Mr. Anderson followed Mr. Dalton from the house, the two men walking close behind him.

"Sit down, sir. I want to know what this means. You have come here, as I believe, with a deliberate lie upon your lips, and while I know nothing for which I can detain you, I wish an explanation of this thing. Have these men told the truth? Were you in jail for stealing from a family in Brown City who were kind enough to shelter you?"

Before any answer was given, Winnie came running over to the office almost out of breath. "Oh, papa, that man has stolen my diamond ring you gave me! I took it off my finger while I was playing for him and laid it on the piano, and it is gone."

"Excuse me, miss; you laid your ring on the piano, I know, and I think I saw it fall inside; if you will look I am sure you will find it there. Shall I go over and show you where it is?"

"Allow me to suggest that you search him first, for if he gets out of this room you may never see the ring again."

Escape was hopeless: Mr. Harold knew the two men by whom he was confronted, and dropping his air of injured innocence he tried the game of contrition and confession.

"I did take your ring; here it is. I should not have kept it very long; it would have done me no good, I should have been so sorry for taking it. I should have returned it to you in a day or two. I ask your forgiveness. I will leave at once and the lecture need not be announced. I will not infringe any further on your hospitality."

"I am not so sure about your leaving at once. You have stolen something of value and admitted the theft. Go into that back room and wait there till we determine what to do. Your story was told to Mr. Holloway first. I must consult with him." Mr. Harold was securely locked in Mr. Dalton's private office.

"Well, this is odd; my niece had her suspicions about that man as soon as she saw him, and put me on my guard, but I was deceived in him. I feel very much indebted to you, young men, for exposing him as you have done. You shall not be losers by it. I must see Mr. Holloway about it. I will let the man stay where he is for a while, and you can go to your work; if you are wanted I will let you know."

Mr. Dalton locked the outer door of his office and started to find the parson.

"Well, sir, how about that lecture this evening by the Rev. Mr. Anderson?"

"Mr. Dalton, were you ever deceived so before? Miss Effie has been telling me all about it; he did seem so clever and such a good talker. I cannot trust any one now."

"Excepting Miss Effie!"

"Oh yes, I will trust her. She can tell a wolf in sheep's clothing easier than I can. She is a grand girl. What will you do with the man?"

"Send him out of the place on a double quick, I think; that is all I can do. We have no jail here, nor any justice to commit him if we could convict him. I do not think he will try any of his tricks about this neighborhood again."

"Double quick." Yes, indeed, and without a drum corps to help him. Mr. Dalton called for the two young men, as he wished them to see Mr. Harold safely off the place. They went at once to the office, but no sooner had the door been opened than they discovered the bird had flown. The office was not a jail, and such an adroit thief as Mr. Harold had proved himself to be could be confined by nothing weaker than iron bolts and bars. He was far enough beyond their reach, and had saved them the trouble of escorting him out of the town.

This strange occurrence was not without its beneficent result. The two young men who for so long had kept aloof were now brought into direct conversation with Mr. Dalton.

"Have you found out who these two young men are, uncle? Did you know anything at all about them when they came here to work?" "No, Effie, I did not. They seemed like such quiet, unassuming young men I engaged them without any special investigation as to their antecedents or where they came from. I will find out something now if I can."

That evening, in place of listening to a lecture from the Rev. Mr. Anderson, Mr. Dalton had the two men for a long time in his office. At first they were averse to making anything known concerning themselves beyond that which had already been discovered, unintentionally on their part, from their telling where they had met with Mr. Harold.

"But, George"—addressing George Holman, the elder of the two—"I think it will be to your advantage for me to know why you are thus so far from home, and, as you say, without any necessity for working as you are doing. You have befriended me, for which I thank you; but I would like to befriend you in return."

"Thank you, sir, we are not in need of pecuniary aid, and do not know of anything you can do for us in any other way. It is only a fancy of ours to go away from home to work. We may return some time before long. We would prefer remaining just as we are for the present, and are much obliged to you for your interest in us. If we have done nothing else than exposing that rascal Harold, we hope we

have gained your confidence, which we will endeavor to retain while we are with you."

"All right, sir; I would not pry into your private affairs; but my family owe you a debt of gratitude which they wish to pay off. Come over to the house with me."

"Oh no, sir, we have only our working clothes on and are not fit to go. Give our respects to the ladies and say we will be happy at any time to render them any service we are capable of."

"Well, then, here is something I wish to do for you," handing each one an envelope bearing the company's stamp on the upper left-hand corner. "You can open them at your lodgings."

"Those are two strange characters. We have no one here who uses such good language as they do. I believe there is some event in their lives, a secret of their own, that lies at the foundation of their being away from home. They are unwilling to tell of their family connections. I wanted to bring them over here this evening so that you could thank them in person, but they declined on account of their personal appearance."

"Uncle, they so seldom—if indeed they have ever—come to our services at the chapel. I wonder why it is. I will find out if it is possible." The following day their story came to light.

"I told you I would know why those men never came to our Sunday services. Uncle, they are Jews, and they went away from home because they had been attending some evangelistic meetings held in their town. Their parents were so angry they drove them out of their home, and they started off thinking they would see whether Christians were all alike. I am sorry they have not met with much to support the teaching they received from the preachers they listened to. George, however, says he has found there is a difference in them. He says, too, they have been puzzled to know how to act in regard to Saturday and Sunday. As Jews they ought to observe the former, but if Christianity is right they believe they ought to keep the latter. They have been working on Saturday while here and remaining quiet on Sunday, but he says 'All the Christians do not do it.' He has promised to come to the chapel next Sunday, and I think both of them will be there. I met George Holman at Mrs. Jones' and had a pleasant talk with him."

"Well done, Effie. I believe you have a key that fits any lock, provided it is on a human heart. How did you manage to find out all this?" "I think your question is answered by your own admission. There is a key to every human soul, and it only requires to be turned in the right direction with a careful hand to open the darkest recesses of the darkest nature. You may call it anything you please: I have only one name for it—sympathy."

CHAPTER XX.

LETTING THE LIGHT IN.

The interview that Effie had with George Holman was productive of great results. She learned that he and his companion, Moses Goldman, had become interested in the story of the Christian's Messiah. Not fully convinced, they were only "interested," yet sufficiently so to endure the ostracism that was the consequence of their action. Somewhat in anger they started from home, and during six months their desire to know more had not been quenched, nor had they yet determined to abandon the faith of their fathers. Still followers of Moses, they were slowly coming in sight of the cross.

Now that their position was known to Effie, and through her to Mr. Holloway, they could frame no special reason for refusing to attend the public services in the chapel on Sunday.

Once more before Sunday came round Effie met George Holman and directed her conversation towards his doubts and uncertainties.

"You have been frank enough to tell me your reasons, and I know you must have been sincere

in your objections, as you say your experiences have not confirmed the views you at first entertained. You must not expect to find all who profess to be Christians living up to their profession. I am sorry so many fall short of it, yet do not think that it is because the foundation is untrue or unsafe. There may be many who build on the sand, but the Rock of Ages is a sure foundation. You may have no hand in the failure of others, and you will not be responsible for their mistakes. Try to be clear yourself."

Sunday came and George and Moses were at the morning services. Parson Holloway took for his text, "Before Abraham was I am," his theme being "the everlasting nature of the Messiah's kingdom," winding up his sermon with Paul's words in the Jewish synagogue at Thessalonica: "This Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ." He had at least two very attentive listeners, and when the bell rang for afternoon service they were both present.

Thus another point seemed to be gained. A second step had been taken, and it was now easier to go forward than to retreat. True there was one short road back to the starting-point—a renunciation of Christ and return to Judaism; but this they could not do. To remain as they were seemed like hanging by a slender thread between joy and woe, peace and turmoil, life

and death. They would be received at home if they left Christ behind. There would be joy at their return, but it would bring no peace with it. It was a severe struggle and it was not ended when the sun went down that Sabbath evening no, nor fully ended for weeks to come.

At one time the conclusion was almost reached to leave Kirkwood in a vain hope that the feeling that filled their hearts might be in some degree softened if not entirely removed. Their daily work was faithfully performed, and to outward observation they were the same calm, quiet men they had been from the beginning; but to the keen, discerning eye of Effie Lane there was a change. The inward working of the Spirit was not hidden from her, and her occasional talks with one or the other would reveal something of what was going on within, and to them some clearer light would break in upon the path they were walking in and help them to see a little further on.

Kirkwood people were reminded of the visit of Mr. Harold by seeing a notice in a paper of his arrest in another part of the State and conviction and sentence to prison for a similar attempt at robbery to the one made at Kirkwood. This event was seized upon by Mr. Holloway, and he alluded to it on the following Sunday as a preface to his text: "What shall it profit a

man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

"You have only one soul to lose, and when that is gone you are gone with it. What will all the money and lands and jewels you can gain do for you when you come to die? Some men go straight to perdition loaded down with all they can carry, and some get inside the gate of heaven with scarce a rag on their backs; but I tell you there is a fine robe clean and white just inside for them. You can deceive me. man can make me believe he is a saint, but he cannot deceive the Lord: He knows better than we do. A man may stick all the titles on to his name, whether they fit or not, and even if he should get through this world with them they will not pass at yonder gate," poining his finger upward and shaking it with all the vehemence he was equal to. "No! they will not pass at yonder gate unless the Lord recognizes them as genuine. No matter what you may have here, if you are without Jesus you have nothing."

It was by no means a polished discourse. On the contrary it abounded with ungrammatical expressions and rather uncouth language; but there was no mistaking where the thoughts sprang from. Parson Holloway portioned out his teaching with a rough adze, and drove his points home with sledge-hammer blows, clench-

ing them with just such illustrations as he found in the daily experiences of his hearers.

Nail by nail was the truth being fastened on many a heart, and on our two young Jews the blows fell not in vain. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The seed that was sown in Waldoville, since nurtured by the gentle dew as well as by the heavier rain, was now slowly revealing the "corn in the ear."

"Miss Lane, how can we be Christians? The Testament you gave us says, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' Now how are we to 'confess with our mouth'? what does that mean?"

"You ought to talk to Mr. Holloway about it; but I think it means that you must make an open profession of your belief. This is what persons do when they wish to unite with a Christian church, and then they are baptized and received into membership with the church of their choice."

"But we understand you do not have a regular church here. Mr. Jones says he belongs to one some six miles away. Would we have to go there to confess Jesus Christ and join that church?"

"I do not think you need to. No doubt we will have a church here before very long, but you need not wait for that. You can confess Christ any time. Next Sunday you can do it if you are ready. I hope you will. Do you really believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah who was promised to your nation, and that he fulfils all that was prophesied concerning him by all the prophets?"

"Yes, He must be, for this Testament says so, and I believe this book is true."

The following Sunday at the close of the usual services, in response to Mr. Holloway's appeal for any one who wished to confess Christ to arise and do so, these two men arose. George Holman spoke for both. He told the whole story of their awakening, their conflict, the darkness, and the light that at length led them into perfect day.

"Are you sure," asked Mr. Holloway, "that Jesus Christ fits the description the Old Testament gives of the Messiah your people are still looking for?"

"Yes, sir, every word of it; and I wonder there is a single Israelite that cannot see it. It is only because they will not, sir."

"Now is a good time for some of the rest of you to do just what these men have done. Who is going to do it?"

"I might as well. I am not a Jew, but I might as well have been for all I have done. She told me what I ought to do," and Dick Wills pointed to where Effie Lane was sitting. "Yes, she saved my life—you all know that—and pointed me to the Saviour, and I want to be just like her. I know I can't be that, but I will get as near it as I can."

Dick Wills' honest confession was not alone; he was followed by several others, some of whom, Jones and Gray among them, had been trying to acknowledge their belief in their daily lives, but who rejoiced to-day that they could by the words of their mouths testify to their love of Jesus.

It was altogether a day of rejoicing. The old parson could almost say, without the least irreverence, "Now let thy servant depart in peace." His eyes had beheld the saving grace of the Lord Jesus and his ears had heard the cry of the penitent.

Ever since the day when he received that bruised arm his strength seemed to be failing. The energy of soul was not abated, but he could not endure the exposure he formerly seemed to delight in. He was approaching the three-score-and-ten—less than a twelvemonth off, and he was seriously debating in his own mind whether he ought not to retire and relinquish the field

to some younger and stronger man. There was now an added reason for this: many of those professing to be Christians, Mr. Dalton's family among them, belonged to other denominations than the one Parson Holloway was attached to, and in case of a church organization they would have a preference for another one. Thus far all the services of the chapel consisted in singing, reading the Word, preaching, and prayer; no ordinances as recognized by the church at large had been observed. They had not been asked for; conversion was the only object in view. Now the subject of a church was being agitated, not in any bitter or sectarian spirit, but with Christian love.

To Mrs. Dalton and her niece were all eyes now turned; from them a suggestion would be almost equivalent to a command.

Quite unexpectedly, and from a different source from any they had as yet looked to, came a solution of the matter. A stranger brought it. They remembered the deception practised upon them once before, and since then they kept upon their guard, yet willing for any one to help them in whom they could confide.

One afternoon a stranger of good personal appearance, of pleasant voice and manners, stepped into Mr. Dalton's office and handed him an unsealed letter.

A casual glance over the contents caused Mr. Dalton to rise, and extending his hand, say, "I am very happy to meet you, sir. When did you arrive? How did you leave my old friend Mr. Harrison? My family will be delighted to hear from him, and we shall all be glad to welcome any one from Westford. Come right over to the house."

We may be sure the tone of the letter was of an assuring character, and the signature at the close of it one upon which full reliance could be placed. It was as follows:

WESTFORD, October 18, -.

My DEAR MR. DALTON:-

Permit me to introduce to you and the kind notice of your estimable family a young man who has lately graduated from the R—— Theological Seminary. You will at once suppose from his name that he is the son of Mr. Halford, a prominent member of my church. In this you will be correct. The close confinement to his studies has somewhat undermined his health; he has naturally a rather delicate constitution, and his physician has advised him to spend the coming winter in a milder climate. I at once thought of your new home, and without previously writing you I advised him to try it, and gave him this little passport. Perhaps—and my prayer goes with the wish—the

Lord may use him to the honor of His great name and the eternal good of many souls.

My kindest regards to your wife and family.

Yours truly,

WILLIAM G. HARRISON.

Mr. Dalton had never met the younger Mr. Halford, and could not of course recognize him; but Mrs. Dalton had no difficulty in giving him a welcome, for she had frequently seen him in Westford, and in addition any one whom her pastor would indorse was welcome to her home.

Finding that his baggage had been left at the store where he had called to inquire for Mr. Dalton, it was sent for without asking his leave. "You will make your home with us while you are here. We are glad to have the privilege of doing anything our pastor asks of us."

"Then you still recognize Mr. Harrison as your pastor. Have you no church here? I noticed quite a neat little building which the storekeeper informed me was a union chapel. He also said an elderly man was the preacher, but not pastor."

"He was correct. We have no church organization, everything is so new here as yet. We have been content to have the gospel preached to us, no matter what name the preacher might bear, so long as it was the Bible truth. Lately some of us have been talking

quite seriously about a change. I think nearly all would be satisfied with a church of our denomination, but we did not know exactly how to bring it about."

"If I can aid you it will afford me pleasure to do it; and while I remain you can rely on my services in any way they will be acceptable. Have you consulted any one outside your own family?"

"No, we have only talked among ourselves. There are two young Jews here who have lately professed Christianity, and they desire to unite with some Christian church; this has set us thinking how to act. Then some of the workmen also are under conviction. We think it is a good time to make some move in the matter."

"Undoubtedly, but how about your present preacher? Does he take any part in this?"

"Yes, he favors it; but he is getting old, nearing seventy, and is rather infirm. He has been in the neighborhood several years, and is quite ready to relinquish his position as soon as there is any one to occupy it."

This was part of the conversation that took place that afternoon in Mrs. Dalton's parlor. She was the principal participant on the part of her family, though occasionally Winnie or Effie would add a few words.

This was Wednesday, and the three days intervening before Sunday were spent in the enjoyment of the exhilarating atmosphere of the pine woods. Parson Holloway would have been wanting in Christian courtesy if he had not invited the young minister to preach on the coming Sunday.

"You are a young man just from the seminary, so I am told. I do not often hear a college sermon, and our people never do. Just give us a good talk about the Lord, and I will be on hand to help if you need me."

Mr. Halford could scarce restrain a smile at hearing the invitation couched in such ambiguous language, but he had the good sense to know that he was not at college now, and phrases were not always cut and dried beforehand everywhere else.

"Certainly, it will afford me pleasure to give your people a talk about the Lord, but I fear you will be disappointed in what you call a college sermon. I do not keep a stock of anything of that name on hand and cannot give you one. I will try and give you the truth as it is in Jesus."

There was but little spare room on Sunday morning in the chapel. Word had been sent far and near that a new preacher would be at Kirkwood, and people came many miles to hear

him. All we can give of his sermon is the text. It was short, easily remembered, and, as he said, "easily kept if the heart is right:" "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," the last verse of the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

At Sunday-school Effie Lane occupied her accustomed place, but she drew Mr. Halford-into the work, very much to her relief, for almost the entire morning congregation responded to the invitation to come in the afternoon. As they walked home after the school was dismissed Mr. Halford ventured to say,

"You are doing a noble work, Miss Lane. Your pastor told me of your zeal and perseverance, but I had no idea your success was so great."

"Oh, Mr. Halford, I have not been able to do much. These men were only in the dark, and just needed some one to draw the veil aside and allow the light to shine in."

"God grant that I may do as much wherever I may preach. 'Draw the veil aside,' that is the most difficult task a worker for Jesus has to do, men hold it so firmly. May the Lord help you to draw it still more aside."

CHAPTER XXI.

AMONG THE TOILERS.

WE must not hastily close our story of Kirk-wood, but for a moment cast a backward glance to mark the steps of progress in the work of reform begun there.

When Mr. Dalton concluded that it would be prudent to make the purchase of the mine, and so informed Mr. Hamilton, he had little idea of the results the future would develop. His first plan was to erect comfortable homes for the men who would soon be residents of the place. One by one the old dilapidated cabins had disappeared and new structures took their place. The buildings for the prosecution of the mining operations came in due course, then followed the chapel in which Miss Effie Lane's hand was seen.

Thus constant additions for the temporal welfare of the workmen were made, but little attention had been paid to the real home-comforts of the army of toilers. Here Effie again found a field for her enterprise and energy, and became to the toil-worn mothers the angel of the household. In the place of a cluttered-up living-room she suggested *order*, and it was astonish-

ing how much more room there was in a house when things were "put to rights." The dingy, smoke-begrimed walls soon were made to look like new by a coat of whitewash. "So much more healthy," Effie would say.

So much by way of beginning, and as each family would move into one of the new houses, it seemed as if Effie moved with them. If not in person her spirit seemed present, for as they went about their household duties they thought of her words.

To those who had been in the practice of sleeping on bags filled with straw she pointed out a way to make a more comfortable restingplace with boards and nails and saw and hammer. The patchwork quilts, commenced by Annie Gray, had become favorites; every household must have one at least.

Then the kitchen was invaded. The ashes must be swept up and the surplus removed, while the sticks of fire-wood should be laid in neatly. "Now how much more cheerful the fire looks."

Did any call Effie a busybody? Indeed they did not. Was she ever denied entrance to a single house, new or old? No, indeed! Doors were quickly open as soon as she came in sight.

"Oh, Miss Effie, how shall I do this, or that?" was the constant inquiry, and she would move among the people as a queen among her sub-

jects, and yet she was among them rather as one that serveth.

With the men she held the position of "a friend in need." We know how she taught them by her careful nursing of Dick Wills, and many a bruised hand or limb received her healing care.

"I think I ought to be a doctor, auntie," she said one day. "The men come to me to ask what they should do for their various bruises or cuts. I do not know very much about it, and I am sorry to have to tell them so. They seem to think I ought to know. I think Uncle Hugh will have to get some doctor to live here or in the neighborhood, so many get sick or hurt. It is six or eight miles to the nearest physician, I believe."

"It would be a good thing for the men no doubt, but I am afraid there would not be sufficient demand for his services to make it remunerative. How would it do for us to try some simple remedies, syrups and salves and such things? The botanic physicians say the plants that grow in any neighborhood, if properly used, are the very ones that will be helpful in any diseases that belong to the locality. I do not know how true this may be, but we might use some of them which the books recommend. I noticed some boneset and horehound, and these are very useful in some kinds of colds."

Thus another addition to the "comforts" of the toilers was planned, and Mrs. Dalton commenced the making of syrups and ointments, for which she found an abundant demand.

Effie also encouraged the growing of useful plants around the house, herbs of various kinds intermingled with the flowers that were more for ornament. When the love of the beautiful is inculcated, then the desire for improvement will be manifested. Not only outside but indoors was there evidence of this in the removal of old newspapers pinned to the windows, and in their place good paper shades hung to the top of the window-frame, and tied when rolled up with a piece of some bright-colored tape.

Carpets were among the luxuries that were more slowly introduced. A strip of home-made rag carpet would here and there be found, but bare floors were the rule. "Then," said Effie, "you must sweep up often, so much dirt accumulates," and so improvements were made in every department. Was Effie Lane all alone in this? To everything looking towards the moral or temporal good of the men or their families Mr. Dalton gave his full sanction, and added his help whenever it was required. He spared no expense commensurate with his means, or which the Company would agree to, in order to carry out any suggestion that his niece would make.

Very soon the workmen saw how much their comfort and prosperity depended upon the manner in which their work was performed, and to this we may attribute in great measure the peace and quiet at Kirkwood.

It is the suffering women and hungry children who tell of the silent workshops and mines and the idle men, and only just across the mountain these were to be found, while constant work gave to cheerful women and happy children in every home at Kirkwood cause for thankfulness, and the little "house of God" was to them a daily reminder of the great source of all their blessings.

Twice had Mr. Hamilton and some others of the company paid a visit to their property. On the latter occasion the men were all drawn up in line to receive them as they alighted from the carriages sent to convey them from the railroad.

- "You look," said Mr. Hamilton, "as if you were all ready for some kind of a strike; what is it for? Do you get enough to eat?"
 - "Yes, sir," sounded out quite loud and clear.
- "Do you all get your wages when they are earned, and in good money too?"
 - "Yes, sir, we do indeed."
- "Well, then, what are you going to strike for?"
 - "Strike for our work, sir," and away they all

started in good order, with three cheers for Kirk-wood and the company.

"Not much use in any one trying to instigate a strike among these men. You have them in too good training for that," remarked Mr. Hamilton. "How is it over at Mr. Mears'; has he been working any this season?"

"Very little, I think, and while Mr. Travers is superintendent they will not do very much. I believe Mr. Mears would like to sell out the whole concern. He seems disappointed, and is really disgusted with the way things are carried on. His men are on a strike half the time and spend their earnings for whiskey. He pays them their wages, but most of it comes back to him, for he supplies the drink; he keeps his bar in running order whether the mines are working or not."

"How do you get along about whiskey now? Do the men growl because you do not allow it?"

"Growl! No, indeed, Effie has them in too good training for that. She puts her foot down—it is not a large one—and not a man in the place would dare to say a word against the stand she takes. I am not much when she is about. If I said one thing and she said something different, the men would think for a moment or two, but in the end they would follow

her. I take good care to keep things in this train, and we have not had a single trouble with any of the men since that one when Mike O'Leary came here and tried to create a disturbance. Effic rules, but the men do not know it."

This was only another evidence of her quiet work as a potent factor in shaping the lives of masters and men.

A weak woman, yes, even a young girl, when actuated by love for the Redeemer, can work wonders in the material world, and through these can open the pathway to be trodden which will lead in the end to the eternal world of peace.

"Weak things hath God chosen to confound the things which are mighty, ... and things which are not to bring to naught things that are."

CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER YEARS.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." Eccl. II: I.

YEARS roll around and leave their impress upon things in nature as well as on the sentient beings who throng this busy world of ours. With the Daltons the years had left their impress.

The early disposition of Winnie Dalton was too deeply rooted to show the gradual growth in grace that was developed in her sister Cora. With one the feeling seemed to be, "I am the older, and ought to know what is best for me to do," while with the other it was, "Just as you say, Effie. I will try and do it."

We saw how Cora was early brought under Effie's influence. At the very outset there was a yielding to her advice, and thus these two went forward hand in hand in all the work that was being done. There was no difficulty in telling who was the leader. Some persons are fitted for this position only, while others can lead and work at the same time. We do not design to present Effie Lane as a specimen of perfection. She had her faults, and no one knew them so well as she did; and knowing, she endeavored

to overcome them. In this she succeeded so well that they seldom were seen on the surface; hence we have met with so few. Her spirit was a very determined one, and she did not like to be crossed in any of her plans, yet was patient in listening to any suggestion from her uncle or aunt, but was equally ready to urge the correctness of her ideas. Sometimes she would yield her point, and then it was cheerfully and gracefully done.

It is now ten years since Mr. Dalton first surveyed the rough and unprepossessing surroundings of the little cabin that sheltered himself and his son after they had partaken of the combread and fried bacon at Mrs. Jones' table—ten years of labor in the outer world and of earnest work in the harvest field of the Lord. If we scan them in their particular courses we shall find each has kept pace with the other. Spiritual prosperity has been accompanied with temporal improvement. Not that this is always the case, but here it was most clearly shown to be possible, and the promise was fully realized, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his right-eousness, and all things shall be added unto you."

At first this work seemed to be divided, but long ere the decade had passed the two branches had quietly mingled their streams and flowed on as one. Mr. Dalton was very exact in his dealings with the men. Honest as he was, and acting for others, he demanded strict compliance with rules in all departments of labor, from the chief among the workmen at the rolling-mill or machine-shops to the boys who performed some of the minor duties of the great whole. His motto was "No part of a great machine is unimportant; a little screw if loose may endanger the lives or welfare of a hundred men." Strict attention to every detail was his daily thought.

On the other hand Effie Lane took but little outward interest in the working of the ponderous machinery. She loved to see the huge engine puffing like some imprisoned giant, and she could stand and watch the masses of white-hot iron as they passed between the great rollers and came out duller in color, but not as her uncle did. His soul seemed to be centred upon the successful working of the machinery; hers upon this only as it conduced to the welfare of the families, the small army of men upon whose labors they were dependent.

Mr. Dalton looked upon the workmen as so many subordinate machines, not actually necessary to the success, individually viewed, of the enterprise. Miss Effie looked upon them as men possessing souls to be fitted for eternal joy, not allowed to pass on unsaved to eternal woe.

One such spirit as hers could not but influence others. We have seen the effect on Annie Gray, and through her on the children in the neighborhood. We have seen how the hard heart of Dick Wills was reached and softened through her patient, kindly offices; and when the two doubting Jews came within the sphere of her influence, we could expect no other results than those that took place. Can it then be that he who every day witnessed the good work going forward, who even rejoiced that some power other than his own could keep his men at work when a word from his lips would have set them all adrift—can it be that Hugh Dalton could live under the same roof, sit at the same table, and partake of the same temporal food, without also imbibing some of the spiritual food that Effie Lane daily partook of?

No, there was a quiet work of grace going on in his heart, none the less real because it gave little outward evidence of its existence; yet by degrees it was coming to the surface, and when it was fully brought into the sunlight it no longer grew like a sickly plant feebly sprouting in a dark place, but it took on a healthy growth, developing into a strong plant. The faith like a grain of mustard seed had become a tree.

Turn backward to the coming of the Rev. Mr.

Halford. It was not merely for a little while in order to recruit his health, but when that seemed assured, a work had opened before him that the Lord designed he should accomplish. The year had not passed away ere a church was organized with him as its first pastor. Among those constituting its membership were the two Christianized Jews. They were still Hebrews by race, but no longer professing the religion and following the customs of their fathers excepting so far as they accorded with the gospel of Jesus Christ. God was still their God, but now they had found a Saviour, a Redeemer, a glorious reality, not a deferred hope.

Mr. Dalton was deeply impressed by all he saw and heard upon the occasion, but was not yet ready. The language of his heart was, "I will follow Thee, but not now." He saw Walter Jones, Hiram Gray, Richard Wills, and even little Annie Gray among the others who, standing in the same company with his own life-partner and each member of his family, were recognized as members of "The Memorial Church of Kirkwood."

Did he say, "I am not among them, but I am perhaps as good as they"? Was this the language of his lips or only the suggestion of the enemy, to keep him under his power a little longer? If we could only have looked into that

heart at that moment, we might have seen darkness, turmoil, and distress.

But as in the outward world sometimes the darkest hour is the nearest to the dawn, so it was with Mr. Dalton. That evening as they were again assembled in the chapel his countenance seemed the only one that did not glow with joy and peace. Perhaps not altogether the only one, for Effie did not seem to be as happy as she had reason to be when we consider that the fruition of her hopes and prayers was being realized.

After an unusually earnest appeal to any who might still be uncertain as to the right course to be pursued, Mr. Halford paused for a moment as his eye wandered over the congregation. A deep silence overspread all, when Effie, who presided at the organ, touched a key, and looking at her pastor, as if asking his approval, commenced in her sweet voice to sing,

"Just as I am, without one plea
But that THY blood was shed for me,
And that THOU bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God! I come! I come."

Mr. Dalton's heart was touched; the film was broken. Light entered and he answered, "Yes, I will come," and among the miners and carpenters and furnace-toilers and rolling-mill hands his proud heart sought for and found the

peace his wife and daughters and niece had known something of for so long.

And thus the years rolled by. Peace and prosperity went together, and as we scan the present we find Hugh Dalton as one of the vicepresidents of "The Kirkwood Iron and Machine Company." New buildings have been erected, some of them of quite imposing character. The chapel is now a schoolhouse, while on a little hill a short distance from it stands the beautiful church building whose spire points heavenward. Streets have been laid out in all directions and on one of them nearly opposite the new church we may see a stately mansion, homelike in its surroundings and of comfortable arrangements within. Look on the door-plate. We see the name "Hamilton." Should we knock, perhaps Mrs. Effie Lane Hamilton would respond to our call, or if she were particularly engaged, we might hear the gentle voice of little sixyear-old Winnie ask, "Whom do you wish to see?

Not altogether unfamiliar are these names, and the president of the company could tell you how the visits of his son Harvey had become such frequent ones that he suggested it would save money spent in travelling if he would build a house and put some one in it to take care of him. Harvey acted upon the suggestion, and as

soon as Effie gave her assent to the arrangement it was carried into effect.

Do you ask for Miss Winnie Dalton? Are you desirous to know how that patchwork quilt that Annie Gray commenced progressed? Annie herself could tell you how by perseverance upon her part and a faithful oversight by her teacher, she succeeded in producing quite a creditable piece of work; she would also tell how kind Miss Winnie was in teaching her many other things. Though she is only "about eighteen," she can make a very fair dress, and looks upon her position with pride as dressmaker for the wives and daughters of the town.

Where is the earnest worker for his Master, Parson Holloway? Read the inscription on the face of that tall shaft in the cemetery back of the church building:

SACRED

TO THE MEMORY OF
REV. ALEXANDER HOLLOWAY.
DIED APRIL 27, 18—,
AGED 72 YEARS.

A FINISHED SHAFT POINTS TO A FINISHED LIFE.

There was no broken column to mark his grave; it was polished to the top and surmounted with a crown. He never fully recovered from the rough usage at the time of the trouble when Dick

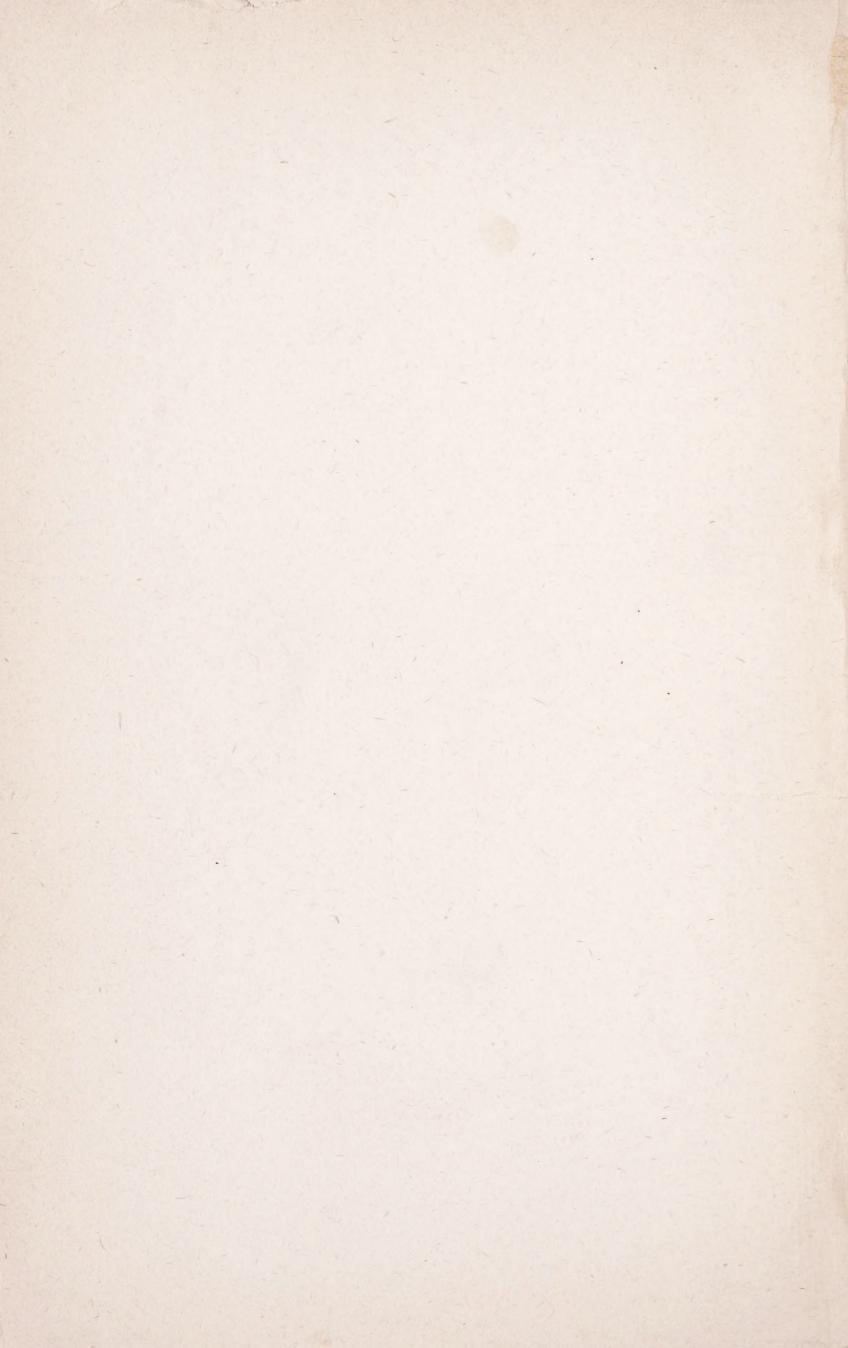
Wills was hurt, and at length after a brief ill ness quietly entered into rest.

Willie has been for some years secretary for the company, and removed to Westford, and has a desk in Mr. Hamilton's office. He finds in his mother's old pastor a kind and judicious friend, and has by his work in the Sunday-school realized that there is something to gain, even in this life, beyond dollars and cents or pleasures that fade while being enjoyed.

We have now reached the end of our story, and what have we learned? Have we found in Effie Lane a fit representation of "the worker for Jesus," when consecrated to the Master's service? Not content merely to have a name as a follower of the Lord, nor yet to feel the assurance of his love, but desirous to show the possession of it by helping others, not boastingly, but sinking self in Christ, she trusted to the revelation of the great day when the books will be opened and all shall be judged "according to their works" and out of the things that shall be found written in the books.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."







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